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SELECTED POEMS OF T. E. BROWN

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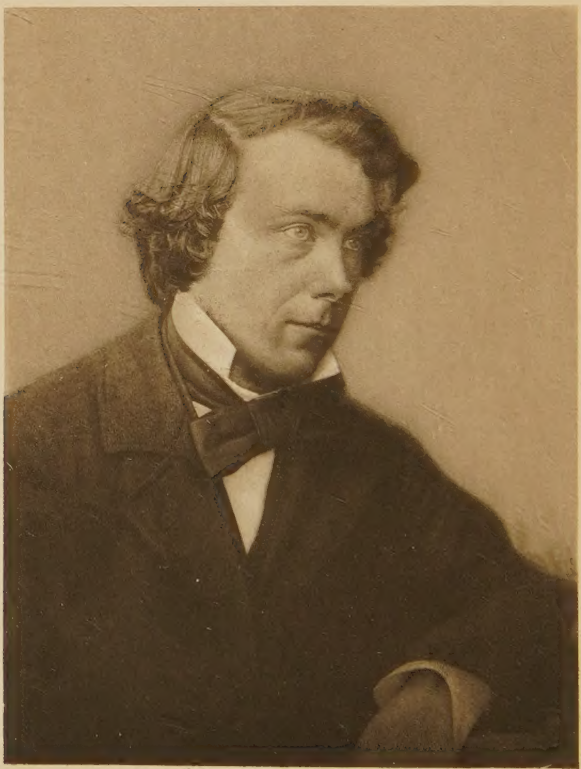

Emery Walker Photo.

Thos. E. Brown

POEMS

OF

T. E. BROWN

SELECTED AND ARRANGED
WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES BY

H. F. B. AND H. G. D.

MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED
ST. MARTIN'S STREET, LONDON
1912

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First Edition May 1908
Reprinted October 1908, 1912

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It seems opportune to place in front of this selection from the Poems of T. E. Brown a statement giving the order, with date and title, in which the several volumes comprising the long series of the author's poems successively appeared.

It should, however, be premised that in many cases before a particular volume was published portions of the contents, more or less complete, and admitting of large variation in the text, had already appeared anonymously, sometimes in the columns of an Isle of Man newspaper, or again as booklets, quasi-privately printed in some humble form by aid of a local publisher. Such were the earliest and now precious versions of *Betsy Lee*, of *Christmas Rose*, of *Captain Tom and Captain Hugh*, of *The Doctor*, of *Tommy Big-Eyes*, and of many minor individual poems, such as *Old John*, *Chalse a Killey*, all long ago out of print, but of surpassing interest to any one concerned with the development of Brown's poetical genius, and the careful steering of his muse.

To come to publications proper. The first to be named is the tentative issue of the original *Fo'c's'le Yarn*, "Betsy Lee," in two consecutive numbers of *Macmillan's Magazine* for April and May 1873,

vols. xxvii., xxviii. This Poem had, as above noted, already been privately printed. It now appeared (in a somewhat abbreviated form), and attracted considerable attention. Before the end of the year it was republished in a single volume, the small volume in green cloth (still to be obtained), which heads our list :—

1. *Betsy Lee, a Fo'c's'le Yarn.* London, Macmillan and Co., 1873.
2. *Fo'c's'le Yarns*, including "Betsy Lee" and other poems. London, Macmillan and Co., 1881. Contents : "To Sing a Song . . "; I. "Betsy Lee"; II. "Christmas Rose"; III. "Captain Tom and Captain Hugh"; IV. "Tommy Big-Eyes."
3. *The Doctor and other Poems.* By T. E. Brown, M.A., late Fellow of Oriel College, author of *Betsy Lee*, *Fo'c's'le Yarns*, etc. London, Swan Sonnenschein, Lowrey and Co., Paternoster Square, 1887. Contents : —"Dear Countrymen . ." "The Doctor," "Kitty of the Sherragh Vane," "The Schoolmasters."
4. *Fo'c's'le Yarns* (new edition) [as *supra*]. London, Macmillan and Co., 1889.
5. *The Manx Witch and other Poems.* By T. E. Brown, author of *Betsy Lee*, *Fo'c's'le Yarns*, etc. London, Macmillan and Co., and New York, 1889. Contents: —I. "The Manx Witch," by T. Baynes ; II. "The Indiaman," by T. Baynes ; III. "The Christening" ; IV. "Peggy's Wedding" ; V. "Mary Quayle : The Curate's Story" ; VI. "Bella Gorry : The Pazon's Story." Preceded by an Introductory poem, "First Comes Tom Baynes. . ."

Reprints of *The Doctor and Other Poems*, without the Introductory Poem, "Dear Countrymen," appeared as under (Nos. 6 and 7) :—

6. *The Doctor.* A Manx poem, by T. E. Brown, M.A., late Fellow of Oriel College, author of *Betsy Lee*,

Fo'c's'le Yarns, etc. Swan, Sonnenschein and Co., Paternoster Square, 1891.

7. *Kitty of the Sherragh Vane, and the Schoolmasters.* By T. E. Brown, M.A., late Fellow of Oriel College, author of *Betsy Lee*, *Fo'c's'le Yarns*, etc. Swan Sonnenschein and Co., Paternoster Square, 1891.

8. *Old John and other Poems.* By T. E. Brown, author of *Betsy Lee*, *Fo'c's'le Yarns*, etc. London, Macmillan and Co., and New York, 1893. With Dedication: "To H. G. D. and M. E. D., this volume is affectionately inscribed, March 1893."

Posthumously :—

9. *The Collected Poems of T. E. Brown.* Edition prepared by Mr. H. F. Brown, Mr. H. G. Dakyns, Mr. W. E. Henley. London, Macmillan and Co., Ltd.; New York, The Macmillan Co., 1900.

10. *The Collected Poems of T. E. Brown.* Reprinted with Introduction by W. E. Henley. London, Macmillan and Co., Ltd.; New York, The Macmillan Co., 1901.

Note.—The editors of the *Collected Poems* (*C. P.*) had the mass of unpublished poems contained in T. E. Brown's note-books before them. They made a selection of some twenty-seven poems, which were indicated in the Table of Contents by an asterisk. That mark is still preserved in this selection. In one case—the poem entitled "Dartmoor: Sunset at Chagford," which appears on pp. 112-117, 118-121, under the sub-titles * "Homo Loquitur" and "Respondet Δημιουργός"—the asterisk (*) is somewhat misleading, since the last portion of "Respondet Δημιουργός" had already appeared in *Old John and other Poems*, under the title "Homini Δημιουργός." Only, in order to start the fragment as a separate entity, the poet had slightly altered the reading, and in place of the lines :

> But I can do no more : wherefore I am not vexed ;
> But you are, being perplexed
> With suppositions, scribbling o'er the text
> Of natural life. And seeing that this is so . . (p. 119).

substituted :

> What I can do I do, nor am I vexed
> Nor worn with endless strife.
> As you are, being perplexed,
> With suppositions, scribbling o'er the text
> Of natural life.
> And seeing that this so . . (*Old John*, p. 93.)

The subtitle *"Homo Loquitur" to Part I. is editorial.

A word remains to be said about the portrait of T. E. Brown as a youth—chosen for the frontispiece of our volume. Those familiar with the expression of the older man, so admirably reproduced in the portrait of the *Collected Poems*, may feel dissatisfied. They may miss that mixture of humour and gravity in the countenance which the weight of years had wrought in his features even before he began to publish his poems. On the other hand, the new portrait, which is said to be really an excellent copy of the original, looks the very image of the youth who was to be the father of the man. Doubtless one notes the absence of the ironical strain; but the humour, or at any rate the fun, seems to lurk round the lips of this youthful portrait. And as a discerning judge of character remarks, "Why! he has eyes that look as though they could see into both worlds."

H. G. D.

INTRODUCTION

I

THOMAS EDWARD BROWN was born on May the 5th, 1830, at Douglas, in the Isle of Man, where his father, the Rev. Robert Brown, was incumbent of St. Matthew's Church. Thomas was the sixth of ten children. His mother was a Thomson, of Scottish extraction though born in the Island, and this mingling of Manx and Scottish blood played a considerable part in the formation of the poet. "I also have a root in Scottish ground,"[1] he used to say, ". . . my grandfather came from Jedburgh . . . upon occasions I gravitate largely to the Caledonian basis . . . and I have an inextinguishable longing *antiquam exquirere matrem.*" Late in life Brown drew a charming and characteristic sketch of his father, which lets us into the secret of much that was remarkable in himself. "Yes, the man was right. I do love the poor wastrels, and you are right, I have it from my father.

[1] The passages from Brown's correspondence quoted in this Introduction are taken chiefly from the two volumes of *Letters of Thomas Edward Brown*, edited by Sidney T. Irwin, Westminster, Constable and Co., 1900, now out of print, and also from unpublished letters to Mr. H. G. Dakyns and myself.

He had a way of taking for granted not only the innate virtue of these outcasts, but their unquestioned respectability. He, at least, never questioned it. The effect was twofold. Some of the 'weak brethren' felt uncomfortable at being met on those terms of equality. My father might have been practising on them the most dreadful irony; and they were 'that shy' and confused. But it was not irony, not a bit of it; just a sense of respect, fine consideration for the poor 'sowls'; well—respect, that's it, respect for all human beings; *his* respect made *them* respectable. Wasn't it grand? To others my father was a perfect Port-y-shee (port of peace). To be in the same room with him was enough. To be conscious that he was there, that he didn't fight strange of them, that he never dreamt of 'scowlin' them. . . . To think of a *Pazon* respecting men's vices even; not as vices, God forbid! but as parts of *them*, very likely all but inseparable from them; at any rate *theirs*. Pitying with an eternal pity, but not exposing, not rebuking. My father would have considered he was 'taking a liberty' if he had confronted the sinner with his sin." There we have "Pazon Gale" of the *Fo'c's'le Yarns*, and a large part of Brown himself; perhaps with the irony and the humour omitted, and these he may have got from his mother.

Brown's outer life was singularly devoid of incidents. When he was two years old his father was made Vicar of Kirk Braddan, near Douglas, and it is round Kirk Braddan that the memories of his youth and the affections of his later life are concentrated and condensed in *Braddan Vicarage* and *Old John*. At Braddan Vicarage the boy was taught partly by the parish schoolmaster, but chiefly by his father, who gave him the elements of Latin, and that love for style

which marked his literary career. When fifteen years of age he was sent to school at King William's College. In October of 1849 he went to Oxford and was admitted to a servitorship at Christchurch. In 1853 he took a Double First, but, to his bitter mortification, his servitorship was considered a bar to his election as a Student, and he records that the first night after his Double First was "one of the most intensely miserable I was ever called to endure." In April of the following year, however, he reached "the summit of an Oxford man's ambition," and was elected Fellow of Oriel. He was ordained deacon, but "never took kindly to the life of an Oxford Fellow,' and after a few terms of private tuition he returned to the Isle of Man as Vice-Principal of King William's College.

The chief acquisitions of his Oxford career seem to have been a sound and wide acquaintance with the classics—"Ah, sir, that Greek stuff *penetrates*." "As the years roll on, I doubt not many a hammer will ring at the fastness of the classics. Possibly an entire disruption may take place. But if ever there was a case of my favourite Virgilian—*antiquam exquirite*—it will be that of England when it awakes from this dream which is only not lewd because it is fatuous. The awakening is sure to come. The study of Greek . . . will revive with tremendous force, and a new generation will demand of us what we have done with so precious an inheritance"—remarks in which we catch that note of deep conservatism which characterises him. And *pari passu* with the classics, he learned at Oxford to love "quaint books" like Wood's *Athenae Oxonienses*; he cultivated music, which he had studied as a boy, and to which he was passionately devoted throughout

his life, though his straitened means may have hampered his freedom, as a phrase in the following passage suggests :—"I do not know of anything that gave me more pleasure during the whole term than that pleasant ramble over the keys, after my two months' fast"—and, above all, he had already begun "to pick up racy anecdotes," wherein we see him started on one of his major lifelong quests.

In 1857 Brown married his cousin, Miss Stowell, in the little church of Kirk Maughold, a place for ever after most sacred of all his island haunts ; Maughold comes before Bradda in the *Epistola ad Dakyns*. In 1861 he left King William's College to assume the headmastership of the Crypt School at Gloucester, where he was not happy, though it must, doubtless, have been a satisfaction to him to meet and deeply influence the youthful W. E. Henley. What he called "the Gloucester episode" woke that inveterate longing for his island which never left him, and to his mother he declares himself as "one of the most patriotic exiles it can boast." In 1864 the present Bishop of Hereford, Dr. Percival, invited him to join the staff at Clifton College, the headmastership of which Dr. Percival had just assumed. Brown accepted, and the larger part of his life was spent at Clifton as a schoolmaster. The place, with its soft western climate, the downs, the Leigh woods, the Avon, the Severn, and the distant hills of Wales —"the prime of English Arcady"—made a deep impression upon him, producing that "dream-mood" of which he often speaks. It was there that the Brown "of the long solitary walks on the downs" was developed, and it was there that most of his *Fo'c's'le Yarns*, and much of his other poetry, were written. No doubt his passion for his native land and

its scenery was heightened by absence, and by contrast with the softer airs and richer landscape of Clifton, and in that characteristic poem called *Clifton* he tells us how his heart yearns back to the gorse, the heather, the lichens, the sea-thunder, and the silences of his island home.

For twenty-eight years Brown passed a kind of dual existence at Clifton, teaching the boys and inspiring some of them, making close and warm friendships with the masters, and also with others in the town, leaving a deep imprint on the school; but the inner man was withdrawn into the sacred recesses of his family affections, his long and solitary musings on the downs, and the steady accumulation of his poems, about which I believe he seldom spoke, though the calm and the assurance with which—*ohne Hast aber ohne Rast*—he forged ahead, clearly indicate that in literature lay his true life's work. In 1892 his health gave way. "Then you don't know that I have been nearly 'kilt.' *Proximus vidi*, I can assure you. . . . I believe it is all up with me. I may go for a few years more yet, but the mainspring has been rudely shaken, and I shall be a simulacrum, an approximation to the manes and lemures of fable." In the autumn of 1892 Brown gave up his mastership and retired to the Isle of Man, where he rapidly recovered physical health. "O," he writes, "the delight of this leisure! I read, I write, I play. Good gracious! I shouldn't wonder if my music came to something yet. I have actually gone back to singing, a vice of my youth. . . . I always think the sea the great challenger and promoter of song. Even the mountain is not the same thing. There may always be some d——d fool or another behind a rock. But the sea is open, and you can tell when

you are alone; and the dear old chap is so confidential: I will trust him with my secret." "But, O Irwin! the leisure of it! the leisure of it! This is at last life." "All life hitherto has detained me from my true life." Phrases suggesting the strain to which the dual life at Clifton had subjected him.

Brown's last years were spent chiefly in the Isle of Man, revelling in its scenery, living with its people, renewing the memories and the ties of his youth, "seeking his ancient mother," obeying a passionate attachment which abhorred any lesion with the past. "Altogether it will be very hard to get me away from this perfectly bewitching place. I have a sort of hold over the people which I feel is not precarious. . . . You have no idea how the old echoes repercuss and make music of my life. One goes to see a dear old creature of eighty-one. She knows you and everything about you, everything behind you, and, if possible, before you. . . . These (the elders) are such as I would fondly hope are gathering a gentle, soothing sort of gossip about me to tell the happy *majores* when they meet them in Elysium." "I walked over the mountains yesterday, and finished in a labyrinth of lovely glens, imperfectly known by me. The sweetest of solitudes, each one. It is so delicious to pore over a country like this, and draw out the very soul of it." It was this frame of mind which induced him to refuse the Archdeaconry of the Isle of Man when offered to him in 1894. "I seek no preferment anywhere, certainly not in the Isle of Man. At some cost I have purchased my freedom, and will not lightly part with it. . . . A few years will finish the business, and I must be free—free to do what I like, say what I like, write what I like within the limitations prescribed by my own sense of what

is seemly and fitting. Literature is my calling, and that in the most liberal interpretation, ranging from *Die hohe Kritik* to such lucubrations as *The Gel of Ballasallaw*. With this view I need absolute freedom, freedom to go to church or not to go to church, freedom to commune with local preachers and occasionally to attend Methodist chapels, freedom to smoke a pipe in a Manx public-house, freedom to absent myself from church conferences and ruridecanal potterings—in short, *absolute* freedom. If from this freedom there should proceed anything whereby my native island may profit, either by way of self-realisation or harmless mirth, *apponam lucro*." This was the final dedication of himself to his island for the few years that remained. Yet with his deep attachment to the past, he is drawn towards Clifton and that rich western land. "The dream condition which you describe I enter into with all my soul. The old life once lived and for ever passed from us! A brooding presence that haunts the air, and charges it with memories that are almost more vital than the obvious surroundings. . . . Yes, Clevedon sums up our life more even than Clifton. To creep into it quietly some morning, to drop down from Cadbury, and just breathe it again—how delightful it would be!" And the draw towards Clifton gathered strength. "All my affections flow steadily and increasingly Clifton-wards. You have cured me of a cold that was beginning to irk my spirit, the sense of estrangement, and a deadness. Well, thank God for that! I believe the cure is permanent, and that my next visit to Clifton promises to be a very happy one." If he could come back I think he would say "It was." On the evening of Friday, October the 29th, 1897, he died quite suddenly while addressing the

boys in one of the Houses on the theme of "The Ideal Clifton." Such are the simple outlines of a life as remarkable for its apparent outward unimportance as for its probable spiritual value in the sum total of English literature.

Physically, though not tall, Brown gave one the impression of a very big man. He had a slow sort of urgent walk, like leviathan pressing through the floods. His voice was rich and deep, the face extremely mobile, the mouth slightly ironical, the eyes of a most winning kindliness, "love-deep" eyes, to use one of his own happy phrases. He was fond of boating, bathing, but above all of interminable long rambles. His spirits were high when he was in them; his fun, his humour, his mimicry, rose to the pitch of rollicking at times, "one felt that bed was almost an impossibility; one had been so wakened all over by Brown's wild spirits, his loud peals of laughter, his merry wit, his boisterous, almost schoolboy fun," to quote a friend's report of an evening passed in his company. But beneath this bubbling fountain of mirth, which was only intermittent, lay a deep well of tenderness nigh to tears. Indeed, tears and laughter were very close to each other in Brown's temperament. He styled himself "a born sobber," and admits that he has to battle with the *hysterica passio*. Such a diathesis was inevitable in one so profoundly and humanely tender, so sensitive to the inrush of nature, so conscious, like all fine poets, of the *lacrimae rerum*. It was there and could not be helped, but the *passio* was corrected and curbed by a rich ironical humour that preserved it from all taint of sentimentality. In *Risus dei* is he thinking of himself?—

Methinks in Him there dwells alway
A sea of laughter very deep.

And if He laughs at fools, why should He not?

but

God doth dwell
Behind the feigned gladness,
Inhabiting a sacred core of sadness.

In these passages he himself gives us the expression of the two moods. He would say, "I am certain God made fools for us to enjoy, but there must be an economy of joy in the presence of a fool." On another occasion he feared that he had got into trouble with his beloved Manxmen for making fun of them; he complains that "our Manx folk cannot understand how one can laugh at a man, and at the same time love and respect him. Want of humour, I suppose. But it is a great nuisance and a great impediment." The truth is that when the humour came upon him Brown could not help making fun. He lectured once at Douglas on Old Kirk Braddan, and imagined that it had been a failure. "The people were most hearty and indulgent; so it must have been my own fault. . . . The fact is they were too indulgent, stimulated me to unstinted mimicry — buffoonery — what you will. And they laughed and laughed, till with horror I awoke to the consciousness that I was treating old Braddan life like a school of comedy, of which my father constituted the central figure and protagonist. Some tender things I believe I said, but the subjective condition of my hearers, aggravated by my own impudence, carried everything away into a *βάραθρον* of farce. *Vae mihi*!" Of human nature at large Brown was, in fact, an ironical but not unkindly

spectator, and may be it was no accident which led him to close his last volume, *Old John*, with the sonnet *At the Play*.

> Even so we gaze not on the things that are,
> Nor aught behold but what is adumbrate ;
> The show is specious, and we laugh and weep
> At what is only meant spectacular ;
> And when the curtain falls we may not wait ;
> Death takes the lights and we go home to sleep.

But deeper than this ironical mood, which after all was only for the surface of things, the outer spectacle of life, lay the tenderest outgoings to humanity at large, to his friends, to his family. To use Fynes Moryson's phrase, "he would catch their loves as it were with a fish-hook." The stories that affect him abundantly prove the "store of love" that was in his heart. For example: "The Chickens' Lighthouse lies off the island called the Calf of Man, due S.W. From the shore of the Calf a long slope runs up to the crest of the island; this slope exactly faces the Chickens. Near the top of the slope, nestling under the crags of the crest, are the cottages inhabited by the families of the light-keepers, their doors opening right toward the Chickens far down below them. Now the light-keepers are absolutely separated from their families for three months at a time. But—and here is the point—these good fellows have, of course, a powerful telescope, and they solace themselves with looking through it at their children *playing* in front of the cottage doors. Isn't that beautiful? Ah! human hearts! Fancy on Sundays (Sabbaths—they are Scotchmen), how proud the mothers must be *to hae the bairns braw for the guidman to see them through the spying-glass*! 'Gie little Kate her cotton gown and Jock his Sunday coat'—isn't that

it? . . . There now, have I moved you at all? Such things one picks up here, and, with a little more trustfulness and godly sincerity, and man-to-manness, a little ready and wholesome ὄρεξις, a little more *love*, in short, how much more one might pick up! And is not *pick up* a most damnable phrase? Ought not the appetite for these things and the perception of them to be *normal*; and is not normal a damnable phrase, for which it were well to substitute 'our daily bread'?" There we have the stuff of one of Brown's poems in the making, a proof of the heart he had for humanity, and a sample of what was his natural emotional pabulum, what he called "the food for souls": "I believe," he says, "that Jowett, like so many Englishmen, carried the principle of not *pinning his heart upon his sleeve for daws to peck at*, so far as to forget that, besides the pecking daws, there are the craving *hearts* of others . . . craving for the food, which, God help us! is not too abundantly spread upon the tables of this world." It was the responsive attachment of his fellows that he longed for; "Her love for her son was only equalled by her love for F., and a lovable creature he is. It was more than love, it was worship. . . . Tremendous! to have won that love, to have won it by simple kindness and humanity." And, of course, in the still nearer relations of friendship and the family this wealth of affection found a fuller field. Brown's letters prove his devotion to his friends; *Clevedon Verses*, *Lynton Verses*, and *Aber Stations* show the family bond too sacred almost to be touched even by the delicate hands of poesy.

And yet with all this "store of love" in his heart, Brown was a born solitary. There can be no doubt about it. He was right who said, "You must not

think you know all about Brown because you see so much of him. However intimate he may be with his friends there is quite another Brown who takes long solitary walks on the Downs." Brown himself will describe himself as "shouting for *lonely* joy." And we shall presently see the profound significance of this solitary side in his temperament. There was a certain pride and reserve about him, a shyness as of some sylvan creature that would not let itself be caught. This was probably of the essence of his nature; but to me it suggested the possibility of some deep wound in early youth. In an unpublished poem entitled *Credo* he more than confesses, though half in playfulness, this natural reserve:—

I have a faith as strong as steel,
Whether it is old or new,
Shall I to you its form reveal?
Certainly not to you, my friend,
Certainly not to you.

I have a hope that streaks my night
With bars of heavenly blue;
Shall I to you its source indite?
Certainly not to you, my friend,
Certainly not to you.

* * * * *

I have a rock from which my foes
Serenely I can view;
Shall I to you the place disclose?
Certainly not to you, my friend,
Certainly not to you.

I have a love that fills my heart,
A love that's known to few;
Shall I to you the name impart?
Certainly not to you, my friend,
Certainly not to you.

For you're so "well informed," dear sir,
That if my thoughts are due
To any man, I do aver
It's certainly not to you, my friend,
Certainly not to you.

II

THE work of T. E. Brown is marked by strong individuality and power. If we are to reach the secret of this individuality and power, if we are "to ponder" and understand "what he meant," we cannot avoid considering him under the threefold aspect, moral, intellectual and spiritual—that is to say, we must endeavour to discover what manner of man he was in what he used to call "the inner soul." Brown himself has expressed the threefold attitude in the close of his poem on *Pain*:—

For there is threefold oneness with the One;
And he is one, who keeps
The homely laws of life; who, if he sleeps
Or wakes, in his true flesh God's will is done.

And he is one, who takes the deathless forms,
Who schools himself to think
With the All-thinking, holding fast the link,
God riveted, that bridges casual storms.

But tenfold one is he, who feels all pains
Not partial, knowing them
As ripples parted from the gold-beaked stem,
Wherewith God's galley onward ever strains.

To him the sorrows are the tension thrills
Of that serene endeavour
Which yields to God for ever and for ever
The joy that is more ancient than the hills.

And yet no one would have objected to such a trichotomy more than Brown, for no one was more of a piece than he; but that was because the essential life of him resided wholly in one of the three divisions, the spiritual region; it is his spiritual life that permeates and governs his moral and intellectual being and gives to himself and his work a singular unity of tone.

In Brown we shall find no formal, self-conscious code of ethics; holding, as I think he did, that if the deep roots of the spiritual life were strong and healthy it could not go wrong with the moral or the intellectual being. Not that he is not a moralist of the highest demands. As was inevitable in a poet and a man of strong emotions, it is almost exclusively in the region of love that ethical problems present themselves to him. He happened, as was his wont, to be reading contemporary English fiction, and found a text for his teaching in the characters of two heroines "Tess" and "Kate"; his passionate belief in the sacredness of womanhood was hurt in the one case and not in the other. He is indignant at any tampering with chastity, and cannot abide the apologetics for *Tess*. "'The heroine was condemned under an arbitrary law, not founded in nature,'" he replies to an apologist, "that is, *the law of chastity is not founded in nature*. Methinks a precious doctrine." But it is not a formal or conventional chastity that he is defending. As in the intellectual and in the spiritual sphere, so in the moral, he wishes to force the emotional vision, the emotional grasp on the situation, up to its highest power, and carries his standard of chastity into a region where the dross of carnality is purged in the flame of the purest passion; "My whole being rushes out to apprehend the passion of love. Once dissipate that horror (of which I have

perhaps said enough), and the field of expectation is even greedily devoured by me (*corripio campum*). The removal of that physical check makes me abound in the opposite sense. And, indeed, I see the whole situation as *chaste*, or rather soaring into an atmosphere which doesn't differentiate things in that way"; and so he condones the "loves" of Philip and Kate in the *Manxman*, nay, "goes with them to the very apogee . . . of their rapture." That there was a still more excellent way, a touch higher than the very apogee of physical passion, I think he believed. Tom Baynes expresses it on more than one occasion :—

> "But George," I said, "isn' there no love
> That's greater than that, that's risin' above
> The lek o' that—why can't there be
> No love without wooin' and all that spree?
> Couldn' ye love and never make to her
> No love nor nothing, nor never spake to her?
> Couldn' ye look to her like a star
> Up in the heavens quite reggilar?"

That was his ideal, the sacred writing, the hieroglyphic; "Man gives the swift demotic," and I doubt whether he expected his "old salt, old rip, old friend, Tom Baynes" to live ever to "the height of such great argument." For Brown was eminently a man, conscious of and full of the stuff men are made of. "You focussed the lovers at Bristol. By Jove, how the modern sailor improves in the matter of reserve and dignity! At a parting scene it used to be much if he was sober, but as for slobbering it was *de rigueur*. Lost and gained—don't you think, a certain *abandon* . . . would be pleasing I should say, to sympathetic onlookers. *Sacred*, did you say? Oh, Jack, don't!" "The old alternate stroke is there, the see-saw of what men really are and must be, up to the heaven

of purity and peace, down to the *sentina* of honest nastiness. Aren't we made so? He that denies either *Schwung* is a monster and no man."

It is more the ugliness, the defacement of some lovely object—some exquisite sea-shell—the havoc wrought by impurity, rather, perhaps, than its sinfulness, that Brown resents. Again taking his text from a novel: "Madame Bovary," he says, "is an exceptional woman. She is not like Messalina, but fate-borne like Clytemnestra. Pity her! she is pathetic! believe me she is, and intended to be so. The men are not adequate; there is the central poignancy of it all . . . but Madame Bovary staggers into their arms, drunk with the most infernal philtre. . . . Get rid of the satire notion, and approach this awful ruin as a ruin—let it be to you a Baalbec, not a Lupanar. Woe! woe! woe! I can't think of her without tears." More poignantly, still, from the experience of his own life, the same idea is expressed in *Lime Street* and *Hotwells*.

But it is certain that Brown looked for the resolution of sin, evil, ugliness in another life where these things should not merely be banished, but should actually be transmuted into forms of loveliness and light. In one of his most powerful pieces, *The Schooner*, this conception forms the very core of the poem; the filth, the slime, the dirt, lead up to the splendid atonement of the final stanzas:—

> Sleeps; and methinks she changes as she sleeps,
> And dies, and is a spirit pure.
> Lo! on her deck an angel pilot keeps
> His lonely watch secure;
> And at the entrance of Heaven's dockyard waits,
> Till from Night's leash the fine-breath'd morning leaps,
> And that strong hand within unbars the gates.

So, too, in *Catherine Kinrade*, the wrong of her life and the wrong done her find their *Versöhnung* in heaven. Brown is an optimist, certain of the final adjustment and reconciliation in "the tenderness of Eternity."

> And now it's all so plain, dear Chalse !
> So plain—
> The wildered brain,
> The joy, the pain—
> The phantom shapes that haunted,
> The half-born thoughts that daunted—
> All, all is plain
> Dear Chalse !
> All is plain.

I do not think that Brown approached the problems of life and of the universe through the intellect—that was not the region in which they presented themselves to him. I doubt whether he regarded the intellectual process as really of the roots. His phrases about the intellect and its material, knowledge, are cold; "genius is intellectual not moral. For instance, it seems probable that the greatest genius in the universe is the Devil." He almost resents absolute concrete knowledge, and can talk of a man being "fact-poisoned," and "O, the weary knowledge" is instantly answered by "O, the hearts that fill"; he thought in moods of emotion, if one may use such a phrase; what he sought for were "the golden life-chords unalloyed with thought"; for him there was an intuition profounder than formal knowledge, and a logic superior to the "languaged logic" of the brain. He is impatient at the presentation of Symonds as an "agonising searcher after the *absolute*" in the region of the intellect; but, as we shall presently see, Brown himself was every whit as much a searcher

after the absolute, though in another region, in the region of the spirit. Throughout the letters he seldom discusses a question from the side of the pure reason. The problems were there, of course, but the rational solution of them was not satisfactory to his temperament; he preferred the spiritual. "You say you don't believe in a future state but you have 'gleams of hope'! We are all much in the same plight. . . . Independently of revelation, the matter is a question of metaphysics, and a very subtle one. It has beset humanity from the very beginning, and (this is important) you can't lay the ghost. Rest for a moment from the pressing concerns of this life, and there you are, you and your question. It is the inevitable attitude of the soul, what one might call its obvious native polarity. 'The gleams' are blessed things, just caught at our noblest throbs and in our most ecstatic moods. That they are ecstatic, as apprehended by us, does not disprove their essential permanence. Rather it suggests the contrary. Metaphysically, the balance is in favour of a future state. To a sceptical nature like mine, the *balance* is everything. That is what I get from my own reflections, or rather, what I got ages ago, helped by Plato and confirmed by Butler. It was done once for all; you can't reopen these metaphysical problems. Let sleeping dogs lie. . . . Must I always be breaking stones on the road to heaven?" and with that he declines any further "to finger idly the old gordian knot." Two moments of suffering and loss brought him through the negative into the positive mood; "concerning those loved ones—whether any communication with them now is possible, whether we shall hereafter know them or have anything to do with them, all this is to me the merest mist. . . . I

have to tell you now that I know nothing about 'a disembodied state'; that to me is altogether removed from the sphere of practical considerations. . . . I simply know nothing; I submit, I acquiesce even, but that is all." But eight years later the positive mood is reached. "One thing emerges—my absolute belief in immortality. I am not naturally a materialist, that is a plant not native to my mind; but scales of materialism have sometimes grown upon my eyes. They vanish now utterly, and I am dazzled and confounded by the inevitable presence, the close connatural rebound of the belief. I have always been an idealist, subject to these dim spots of material feculence that from time to time have obscured my vision. Now I feel my body to be nothing but an integument, and the inveteracy of the material association to be a tie little more than momentary, and quite casual. Death is the key to another room, and it is the very next room." And in that conviction he laid to rest all intellectual questionings on faith. "Men who go in for 'new religions' must not apply to me. I do not mean to say that 'the old is better,' but I am content to drink the blessed old vintage as long as I am *di quà*. When I 'drink it new in my Father's kingdom,' these bothers will be of the past."

Brown's faith was great in man precisely because his faith was boundless in Nature. He sees man *sub specie naturae*, not Nature *sub specie humanitatis*, and thereby avoids, or at least shifts, the pathetic fallacy from the narrower to the wider region; that is to say, man is assimilated to Nature, not Nature to man. In this respect he is far less anthropocentric than Wordsworth, with whom it is natural to compare him. He does not escape the general intellectual

tendency of the time. In a way he carries the deposition of man, which is the result of the scientific movement, a step farther than his brother Nature-poets. It is impossible to understand such poems as *Wastwater to Scawfell*, *The Dhoon*, *The Well*, *The Pitcher*, without bearing this in mind. For *Wastwater* is Brown himself, and all those who feel with him; the passionate surrender of the human soul to God is expressed in the passion of the lake for the mountain. He sees man *sub specie naturae*, and Nature *sub specie aeternitatis*, but it is an *aeternitas* quite as much in the past as in the future; nay, more so, for the past has been ours, and we may be called on to account for the use of the gift. It is his vision of Eternity as much in the past as in the future that explains his favourite "*antiquam exquirere matrem*," and the frequent note of regret that he cannot store the present for all time, his woe that "all this personal dream be fled."

And this brings us to the spiritual side of the man, to the real Brown, the "inner soul" of him. He himself recognises this duality. "Pay every attention to the outer soul; cultivate it and relate it harmoniously, if superficially, with others, or it will fret and work in troublesome counteraction. The great *kick* is within though, where gestation abides, and the quieter you keep that the better." The "inner soul" of Brown was a mood of "passionate contemplation." What was he contemplating, what was he feeling in this "brooding of the sanctuary"? I suppose the answer is Nature. The soul of Brown in relation to Nature seems to be—like the soul of many great poets—to a large extent a thelyc or feminine soul. To him the operations of Nature are impregnations; he surrenders himself and lets Nature

pour in upon him; the "sensuous cells" receive the imprint and the divine vivisector[1] has to report "this brain seems packed with sunsets." When the rapture is upon him he hears the *anima mundi*, and returns from these silent and solitary communings with his whole being—body, soul, and spirit—attuned to that high pitch of passion which is characteristic of his verse, and furnished with that criticism of life which gave him sure, but slightly aloof, judgment on men and things. This large receptivity of spirit is accompanied by other notes which characterise the feminine rather than the masculine temperament. I doubt if Brown set much store by activities; he cared more to be possessed than to possess, processes interested him less than products.

Did he identify God and Nature? I think so, or at least he considered Nature as the direct manifestation of God and the medium through which we reach Him. It is Nature he listens to and for, and yet he says, "In my life I have been so much alone, it cannot be helped. Where is the comrade? I never had one. The absolute self is far within, and no one can reach it. I will not cant, but God reaches it and He only." It is this passionate contemplation of Nature that builds up the real, the inner man; his intimacies are reserved for Nature; to her alone does he unbosom himself; his soul lies naked before her—

> Fleckèd only
> With shadows of those lofty things and lonely,

the passion of surrender is complete. The mood is a mood of ecstasy, not unlike the mood of a mystic contemplating the beatific vision, and, indeed, Brown so describes it—

[1] See *Dartmoor*.

by all the vows I vowed,
I charge you, and I charge you by the tears
And by the passion that I took
From you, and flung them to the vale,
And had the ultimate vision, do not fail.

The joy of it was intense—

The joy that is more ancient than the hills.

But it contained the sorrow of an inevitable overplus

So He filled me—then I lost Him,
Lost Him in His own excess;
For He could not but transcend me
In my very nothingness.

Did Brown speak to God through Nature? Were these profound and intimate communings a dialogue or a monologue? In some moods, when the vision was imperfect,—when his "highest power" was not upon him, there is certainly a dialogue. In the poem called *Dartmoor*, Malvolio Homo, "sick of self-love" and "tasting with a distempered appetite" is gently rebuked by the wider-loving Demiurge. But this interposition of the Demiurge leaves *la question de Dieu* unsolved, as indeed it must be, and the Demiurge himself closes his statement of his own position face to face with man by the ironical remark, "Why, you are Lord, if any one is Lord." But in the happier moments of these moods I think Brown was silent, a listener, or at the most the communion ended on his side, in an "*O altitudo!*" or perhaps in a "*quantum profundum!*" for he loved pools. Beyond this it would be well not to press. "The mysteries are too sacred, the pudicitia of the absolute must not be violated."

The mood of course is not unknown. It has been expressed by Sir Thomas Browne and Wordsworth,

each in his own way; Sir Thomas's famous phrase, "gustation of God"[1] comes near to it, and yet it does not exactly hit it—it is too anthropocentric, and also has the note of the Catholic Church which is wholly absent in Brown. In truth, though Brown in his spiritual moods is constantly reminding us of George Herbert, Sir Thomas, Wordsworth, Blake, yet it is just one of the signatures of his genuineness as a poet that the note is never identical; it is always the note of Brown himself, in harmony—yes, but not in unison.

Few, if any, among modern poets have made so many announcements from Heaven "or near it." The spiritual, inner soul of Brown is there when the Prayers come up to be sorted, he is there when Wesley is welcomed, he is there when Bishop Wilson is forgiven for all his wrong to Catherine Kinrade. But what spiritual lungs are required to breathe this high and rarefied atmosphere! And, indeed, it was not always possible for Brown to keep to the heights of his serene and silent assurance in communing with "Nature and the God of Nature." There come moments of depression, and then he speaks, he interrogates; witness *Homo Logvitur* and *Respondet* Δημιουργός, and "The Voices of Nature" in *Clevedon Verses*—

> Strange! that to me this gurgling of the dulse
> Allays no smart,
> Consoles no nerve,
> Rounds off no curve—
> Alack!
> Comes rather like a sigh,
> A question that has no reply—
> Opens a deep misgiving.

[1] *Hydriotaphia*, last paragraph but one.

What is this life I'm living—
Our fathers were not so—
Silence thou moaning wrack !
And yet . . . I do not know.
And yet . . . I would go back.

We must remember, however, that Brown conceives of God Himself as "inhabiting a sacred core of sadness"; "or," as he puts it elsewhere—

Or is it joy diviner,
Joy echoing in a minor,
Joy vibrant to its pole,
That seems but sad?

and moreover, the mood was not permanent, only intermittent. He recovers and declares—

It is the core and gist
Of life that I should list
To Nature's voice alone.

He bursts into a pæan to his *Alma Mater*, and proudly yet humbly gives thanks that he does still

retain
Some tinct of that imperial *murex* grain
No carrack ever bore to Thames or Tiber.

With such a concept of Nature it is not surprising that for Brown the microcosm was as valuable as the macrocosm, and that the Isle of Man, "my only true home on this earth," and its people were for him his sufficient and inexhaustible field. Moreover, he was drawn to it by that inveterate conservatism which made him resent any break with the past, and convinced him that true knowledge was possible only about things that were, so to speak, bred in the bone. "I like to live in a country till I know it inside out; that is better than visiting many places"; on

Snaefell he says, "I hadn't gone far until the highest power which I ever gained swooped down upon me. I mean the power of sucking out from the country its very inmost soul, and making it stand before me and smile and speak." And this passionate addiction to roots is carried from the country to its people. He is avid for the actual word, phrase, intonation, accent caught from the lips of the people which lets him slip unawares into their inmost core of emotion. His ears are all alert for the native locution, "Jus' the shy," "Not willing to stay," "Going to meet him," and what splendid exposition he makes of their true content; for him they are the very stuff of poems, and his fervid imagination and profound humanity instantly clothe them with the body and blood of mankind. "He chooses to depict people from humble life, because, being nearer to Nature than others, they are on the whole more impassioned, certainly more direct in their expression of passion than other men; it is for this direct expression of passion that he values their humble words." What Pater wrote of Wordsworth is true of Brown. "This class," says Brown, "of what I suppose you would call peasant women (I won't have the word) seems made for the purpose of rectifying everything and redressing the balance and inspiring us with that awe which the immediate presence of absolute womanhood creates in us. The plain, practical woman, with the outspoken throat and the eternal eyes. . . . Here is a woman that talks like a bugle, and in everything sees God." This was the "social brewage" which he gets nowhere else; and it is, for him, his bounden duty in life to seize and perpetuate the flavour of it: "Let us then make all we write very good and sound, Manx timber, Manx calking,

Manx bolting, Manx everything. Manifestly we shall not appeal to strangers, nor, in fact, hope to make a penny. Neither will the Manx public defray the expense of pen and ink and paper. We must make a long arm, and stretch back and grip the receding past. Don't care a scrap whether we thereby run the risk of being unintelligible to the rising generation. That is of no consequence. You and I are a Court of Record, let us execute our office faithfully and lovingly . . . in short, we must be both daring and modest." Brown fulfilled his self-imposed task in *Fo'c's'le Yarns*. He built "a cairn of memories" in his poems—

> So that the coming age
> Lost in the Empire's mass,
> Yet haply longing for their fathers, here
> May see, as in a glass,
> What they held dear—
> May say, "'Twas thus and thus
> They lived," and, as the time-flood onward rolls,
> Secure an anchor for their Keltic souls.

We have it from Brown himself that he is Tom Baynes of the *Fo'c's'le Yarns*. "You are quite right about these stories. Keltic, that is it; the Kelt emerging if you will, but the Kelt a good deal hardened and corrupted by the Saxon. That is Tom Baynes; that is myself, in fact. I never stopped for a moment to think what Tom Baynes should be like; he simply is I, just a crabbed text, blurred with scholia 'in the margent.' So when I am alone I think and speak to myself always as Tom Baynes." That is quite true, of course; all the same, when Brown is Tom Baynes he is Brown in his mimetic humour, Brown the inimitable mimic and actor. The Brown who created or acted Tom Baynes was himself made in

the long, lonely, and silent communings with Nature, and that Brown is to be found in his lyrical poems; though it must be borne in mind that no true conception of his quality and genius can be reached without a thorough knowledge and appreciation of his *Fo'c's'le Yarns* published in the volume of *Collected Poems*.

Fo'c's'le Yarns are written in dialect, but it is not a dialect that presents any serious difficulty to English readers; it is, in fact, Anglo-Manx. The lyrics are chiefly in English. Brown's style in his *Yarns* is large, easy, swinging and free in movement, racy and humorous in diction, poignantly pathetic in emotion. His temperament, indeed, contained two of the ingredients, pride and pathos, which go to make the highest style. In his lyrics Brown is intentionally severe, perhaps even slightly repellent to some; like all authentic poets his note is his own, he exacts attention, the ear must be trained to catch it. But once caught, the tension of the verse stretches and stimulates the nerves; there is a frozen passion about it that dominates the minds of those attuned to it. He disliked the "obvious sweet," and apologises in his letters for the use of a too facile alliteration. He records of his father that to him "style was like the instinct of personal cleanliness," and so it was with Brown himself. But the reserve, the polish, the aridity even of his verse have their reward, and the phrases dropped into the mind abide there, never to be forgotten, but rather to take on colour, warmth, and glow from the life within. Not that Brown cannot be sweetly lyrical when he likes; only that he desired an economy of sweetness. Such lines as

> The honey-tongued quintessence of July,

or—

> Sweet breeze that sett'st the summer buds a swaying.

or—

> I wonder if the hills are long and lonely.

have the *ipsa mollities* of the true lyric. "The quality! the quality!" he exclaims, "do let us aim at that." I think that judged by his own high canon his work must be acknowledged. It is precisely "quality" that his lyrics possess; a very severe "quality," it is true, but proud and distinguished. And through all his work runs a certain vein of quaintness, not unlike George Herbert's, charming the reader with little flashes of the unexpected:—

> Cuckoo! Cuckoo! three cheers
> And let the welkin ring!
> He has not folded wing
> Since last he saw Algiers.

or—

> Poor souls! whose god is Mammon—
> Meanwhile, from ocean's gate,
> Keen for the foaming spate,
> The true God rushes in the salmon.

The workmanship, too, is very perfect, and the attentive reader will be rewarded by touches of a rare felicity; for example, in *Dartmoor*, Homo's testy phrase about "spiders in their foul pavilions" is so gently rebuked and corrected by Demiurge's, "Spiders in their quaint pavilions"; or, again, in *Mary Quale*, a whole criticism of the effect of "progress" on the race is conveyed in a single phrase; the seamen of a steamship—

> are very different now
> From fishermen like us; I don't know how,
> But quite another sort—they hardly seem
> Like sailors—may be something in the steam.

It is only natural that the ecstatic, brooding mood of his communings with Nature should be reflected in his lyrics, both in its aspects of happy acquiescence and in its more troubled phase of doubt and questioning;

the reader will readily find his own examples ; but No. v. of *Lynton Verses* gives a full expression to the first of these moods :—

> Sweet breeze that sett'st the summer buds a swaying,
> Dear lambs amid the primrose meadows playing,
> Let me not think !
> O floods, upon whose brink
> The merry birds are maying,
> Dream, softly dream ! O blessed mother lead me
> Unsevered from thy girdle—lead me ! feed me !
> I have no will but thine ;
> I need not but the juice
> Of elemental wine—
> Perish remoter use
> Of strength reserved for conflict yet to come !
> Let me be dumb,
> As long as I may feel thy hand—
> This, this is all—do ye not understand
> How the great Mother mixes all our bloods ?
> O breeze ! O swaying buds !
> O lambs, O primroses, O floods !

The dubitative, interrogative mood, the mood in which he is not "dumb," is concentrated in the long poem called *Dartmoor*. The mood of humility, of regret at the inadequacy of the creature to compass and enclose the entire boon of the Creator, is given in that profoundest spiritual hymn, *The Pitcher*. And indeed the proper title for Brown's Lyrics would be "spiritual songs." Few, if any, of our Nature-poets had as deep an intuition into Nature ; few, if any of our spiritual poets possess his richness of humanity. These two qualities interpenetrate and stimulate each other, and his grasp on man and on Nature is widened, deepened, intensified. He reveals himself slowly, but like his *Alma Mater*, he repays in overflowing measure those who will go with him in the

appreciation of Man, the worship of Nature, the quest of the Divine.

III

A WORD must be said as to the nature of this selection from the poems of T. E. Brown. It has been decided, for several reasons, to make it as comprehensive as possible within the limits imposed by space. There is a remarkable unity of thought and feeling in Brown's work, and, granted that one has discovered and likes the peculiar savour of the man, his individual and characteristic note, it will be found in fuller or lesser measure in all his poetry. He is very much of a piece, and one poem helps another towards the building up of the impression created by the whole. It is true that he himself spoke jestingly of the poems in *Old John* as "mixed pickles," and compared the volume to a "lucky-bag; people take what pleases them"; but in a letter to H. G. Dakyns he expresses his own feelings more gravely and more seriously. "Written at such long intervals, I feel so uncertain about them. They seem, many of them, strangers to me, voices I don't recognise, in no way expressing a mood that is now to me even possible—quite startling, either in being foreign to my mind as at present operating, or inadequate to its conception. I cling to the hope that, from the very circumstance of this being so, the poems, which fail to commend themselves to me, may find fautors among younger men, men whose moods are more parallel to those which were mine." It is quite natural, nay inevitable, that a poet should feel thus when collecting the work of many years. Yet if the flavour and the influence of Brown be once caught, they will be recognised as

running through all his work. He need not have been afraid. To his "fautors," who are not him, the poems are all him. "Oh, for readers," he goes on, "who would take me by the hand and walk with me through the *labentes anni*"; and this suggests the second reason for comprehensiveness. Though Brown is not yet so widely known as he probably will be, it is nevertheless certain that he has a growing number of admirers both in England and the Colonies; a narrower selection ran the risk of depriving some readers of their favourite pieces.

These considerations have led to the inclusion of all Brown's shorter poems, with the exception of *A Dialogue between Hom-Veg and Ballure River*—which is in dialect, and though printed in the *Collected Poems*, never had the poet's *imprimatur*—and the *Fo'c's'le Yarns*, also, with two exceptions, in dialect, for which, though essential to a proper understanding of the poet, it would have been impossible to find space. The order of the *Collected Poems* has been followed, except that the Manx lyrics in *Aspects and Characters* have been placed in a section by themselves, entitled "'Dramatic Lyrics'; Anglo-Manx," and the "Envoy" to *Fo'c's'le Yarns*, "Go Back," has been printed as the Envoy to this selection.

No selection from Brown's poetry would have been complete without the inclusion of some of his narrative verse. Two of his *Fo'c's'le Yarns*, "Mary Quayle" and "Bella Gorry" are written, not in Anglo-Manx, but in English, and are printed here. To my mind "Mary Quayle" is one of his finest narrative poems; at all events it gives us Brown's touch on two of the deepest emotions in his temperament, his feeling for man and for Nature. There is an interpenetration of the human passion and Nature — Nature playing

bourdon to the movement of the human soul as the tale unfolds; the brooding of the approaching storm preludes to the agony of the drama; the solace of confession made, renunciation achieved, has its counterpart in the dying away of the spent thunder; the whole is raised to a high pitch of lyrical passion, and moves along like a noble piece of music. In "Bella Gorry" we get another mood of the poet's mind, his passionate belief in the splendour and sacredness of womanhood. Rarely has the sensuous, æsthetic perception been raised to such a fervid point of sublimation as in the great scene between the mother and the daughter in the cottage at night. One is irresistibly reminded of the Venus of Milo, where the artist strives for and achieves the same lofty presentment.

Though Brown seldom spoke about his poems, he had that quiet assurance in their soundness and their value, which, very likely, belongs to all true poets. "It is odd," he says, "but, do you know, I have a perfectly serene confidence in their future. How it will come to pass I am not prepared to say, nor does it much matter." Time will give the verdict; but the reason, the high reason, why it did not matter is given by Brown himself in that characteristic and explanatory poem called *Opifex*:—

As I was carving images from clouds,
And tinting them with soft ethereal dyes
Pressed from the pulp of dreams, one comes, and cries:—
"Forbear!" and all my heaven with gloom enshrouds.

"Forbear! Thou hast no tools wherewith to essay
The delicate waves of that elusive grain:
Wouldst have due recompense of vulgar pain?
The potter's wheel for thee, and some coarse clay!

"So work, if work thou must, O humbly skilled!
Thou has not known the Master; in thy soul
His spirit moves not with a sweet control;
Thou art outside, and art not of the guild."

Thereat I rose, and from his presence passed,
But, going, murmured:—"To the God above,
Who holds my heart, and knows its store of love,
I turn from thee, thou proud iconoclast."

Then on the shore God stooped to me, and said:—
"He spake the truth: even so the springs are set
That move thy life, nor will they suffer let,
Nor change their scope; else, living, thou wert dead.

"This is thy life: indulge its natural flow,
And carve these forms. They yet may find a place
On shelves for them reserved. In any case,
I bid thee carve them, knowing what I know."

H. F. B.

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I. ASPECTS AND CHARACTERS

BRADDAN VICARAGE

I WONDER if in that far isle,
Some child is growing now, like me
When I was child : care-pricked, yet healed the while
With balm of rock and sea.

I wonder if the purple ring
That rises on a belt of blue
Provokes the little bashful thing
To guess what may ensue,
When he has pierced the screen, and holds the further clue.

I wonder if beyond the verge
He dim conjectures England's coast :
The land of Edwards and of Henries, scourge
Of insolent foemen, at the most
Faint caught where Cumbria looms a geographic ghost.

I wonder if to him the sycamore
Is full of green and tender light ;
If the gnarled ash stands stunted at the door,
By salt sea-blast defrauded of its right ;
If budding larches feed the hunger of his sight.

I wonder if to him the dewy globes
Like mercury nestle in the caper leaf;
If, when the white narcissus dons its robes,
It soothes his childish grief;
If silver plates the birch, gold rustles in the sheaf.

I wonder if to him the heath-clad mountain
With crimson pigment fills the sensuous cells;
If like full bubbles from an emerald fountain
Gorse-bloom luxuriant wells;
If God with trenchant forms the insolent lushness quells.

I wonder if the hills are long and lonely
That North from South divide;
I wonder if he thinks that it is only
The hither slope where men abide,
Unto all mortal homes refused the other side.

I wonder if some day he, chance-conducted,
Attains the vantage of the utmost height,
And, by his own discovery instructed,
Sees grassy plain and cottage white,
Each human sign and pledge that feeds him with delight.

At eventide, when lads with lasses dally,
And milking Pei sits singing at the pail,
I wonder if he hears along the valley
The wind's sad sough, half credulous of the tale
How from Slieu-whallian moans the murdered witches' wail.

I wonder if to him "the Boat," descending
From the proud East, his spirit fills

With a strange joy, adventurous ardour lending
To the mute soul that thrills
As booms the herald gun, and westward wakes the hills.

I wonder if he loves that Captain bold
Who has the horny hand,
Who swears the mighty oath, who well can hold,
Half-drunk, serene command,
And guide his straining bark to refuge of the land.

I wonder if he thinks the world has aught
Of strong, or nobly wise,
Like him by whom the invisible land is caught
With instinct true, nor storms, nor midnight skies
Avert the settled aim, or daunt the keen emprise.

I wonder if he deems the English men
A higher type beyond his reach,
Imperial blood, by Heaven ordained with pen
And sword the populous world to teach ;
If awed he hears the tones as of an alien speech ;

Or, older grown, suspects a braggart race,
Ignores phlegmatic claim
Of privileged assumption, holding base
Their technic skill and aim,
And all the prosperous fraud that binds their social frame.

Young rebel ! how he pants, who knows not what
He hates, yet hates : all one to him
If Guelph, or Buonaparte, or sans-culotte,
If Strafford or if Pym
Usurp the clumsy helm—if England sink or swim !

Ah! crude, undisciplined, when thou shalt know
What good is in this England, still of joys
The chiefest count it thou wast nurtured so
That thou may'st keep the larger equipoise,
And stand outside these nations and their noise.

OLD JOHN

Old John, if I could sit with you a day
At Abram's feet upon the asphodel,
There, while the grand old patriarch dreamed away,
To you my life's whole progress I would tell;
To you would give accompt of what is well,
What ill performed; how used the trusted talents,
Since last we heard the sound of Braddan bell—
"A wheen bit callants."

You were not of our kin nor of our race,
Old John, nor of our church, nor of our speech;
Yet what of strength, or truth, or tender grace
I owe, 'twas you that taught me. Born to teach
All nobleness, whereof divines may preach,
And pedagogues may wag their tongues of iron,
I have no doubt you could have taught the leech
That taught old Chiron.

For so it is, the nascent souls may wait,
And lose the flexile aptness of their years;
But if one meets them at the opening gate
Who fans their hopes and modifies their fears,
Then thrives the soul: the various growth
appears,

Or meet for sunny blooms or tempests' grappling—
No wind uproots, drought quells, frost nips, blight sears
The well-fed sapling.

Old John, do you remember how you ran
Before the tide that choked the narrowing firth,
When Cumbria took you, ere you came to Man,
From distant Galloway that saw your birth?
Methinks I hear you with athletic mirth
Deride the baffled sleuth-hounds of the ocean,
As on you sped, not having where on earth
You were a notion.

What joy was mine! what straining of the knees
To test the peril of that strenuous mile,
To hear the clamour of the yelping seas!
And step for step to challenge you the while,
And see the sunshine of your constant smile!
I loved you that you dared the splendid danger;
I loved you that you landed on our Isle
A helpless stranger.

Old John, Old John! the air of heaven is calm,
No ripple curls upon the glassy sea;
But, as you wave on high the golden palm,
Though love subdues the thrill of victory,
You must remember how at Trollaby
Your five-foot-one of sinew tough and pliant
Threw Illiam of the Union Mills, and he
Was quite a giant.

O wholesome food for keen and passionate hearts,
Tempering the fine pugnacity of youth
With timely culture of all generous arts,

Rejecting menial tricks and wiles uncouth!
Old John, your soul was valiant for the truth;
But ever 'twas a chivalrous contention:
Love whispered justice, and the mild-eyed ruth
Kissed grim dissension.

Old John, if in the battle of this life
I have not sought your precepts to fulfil,
If ever I have stirred ignoble strife,
If ever struck foul blow, as bent to kill,
Not conquer, by the love you bear me still,
O! intercede that I may be forgiven.
Stern Protestant—*not pray to saints?* I *will*
To you in Heaven.

Old John, you must have much to do indeed
If I am all forgotten from your mind.
Ah! blame me not: I cannot hold a creed
That would impute you selfish or unkind.
Ask Luther, Calvin; ask the old man blind
That painted Eden; ask the grim Confession
Of Augsburg what black error lurks behind
Such intercession.

Old John, you were an interceder here;
For me you interceded with great cries.
How have I stood with mingled love and fear,
And not a little merriment! My eyes
Beheld you not, Old John; your groans and sighs
And gasps I heard by listening at the gable,
Inside of which you knelt, and shook the skies—
But first the stable.

It was a mighty "wrastling" with the Lord:
The hot June air was feverish with the heat
And agony of that great monochord;

Our old horse, standing on his patient feet,
Ripped from the rack the hay that smelt so sweet;
And, when there came a pause, their breath soft pouring
I heard the cows; while prone upon "the street"
Our swine were snoring.

You prayed for all, but for my father most—
"The Maister," as you called him—*that on rock*
Of sure foundation he might keep the post,
And (by a change of metaphor) *might stock*
God's heritage with vines to endure the shock
Of time and sense, being planted with his planting;
That so (another trope) *of all the flock*
Not one be wanting.

Old John, I think you must have met him there,
My father, somewhere in the fields of rest:
From doubt enlarged, released from mortal care,
Earth's troubles heave no more his tranquil breast.
O! tell him what you once to me confessed,
That, all the varied modes of rhetorick trying,
You ever liked "the Maister's" sermons best
When he was crying.

Old John, do you remember how we picked
Potatoes for you in the days of old?
Bright flashed the *grep*,[1] and with its sharp prong pricked
The pink-fleshed tubers. We were blithe and bold.
Dear John, what jokes you cracked! what tales you told!

[1] Fork.

So garrulous to cheer your "little midges,"
What time the setting sun shot shafts of gold
Athwart the ridges!

And when the season changed, and hay was mown,
You weighed the balance of our emulous powers,
How "Maister" Hugh was strong the ponderous cone
To pitchfork; but to build the fragrant towers
Was none like "Maister Wulliam." Blessed hours!
The empty cart we young ones scaled—glad riders!—
And screamed at beetles exiled from their bowers,
And homeless spiders.

But when the corn was ripe, and truculent churls
Forbade us, as we culled the *cushaged*[1] stook,
Your eye flashed fire, your voice was loosed in *skirls*
Of rage. Old Covenanter, how could you look
The very genius of the pastoral crook—
Tythe-twined, established, dominant? "In our ashes
Still live our wonted fires." You could not brook,
You said, "their fashes."

A perfect treasury of rustic lore
You were to me, Old John: how nature thrives,
In horse or cow, their points; if less or more
Convex the grunter's spine; the cackling wives
Of Chanticleer how marked; the bird that dives,
And he that gobbles reddening—all the crises
You told, and ventures of their simple lives,
Also their prices.

[1] *Cushag* (ragwort).

The matchless tales your own great Wizard penned
To us were patent when you gave the key:
I knew Montrose; stern Clavers was my friend;
I carved the tombs with Old Mortality;
I sailed with Hatterick on the stormy sea;
Curled Cavalier, and Roundhead atrabiliar,
The shifts of Caleb Balderstone, to me
Were quite familiar.

But most of all, where all was most, I liked
To hear the story of the martyrs' doom:
The camp remote by stubborn hands bedyked;
The bones that bleached amid the heather bloom;
The gray-haired sire; the intrepid maid for whom
Old Solway piled his waters monumental,
And gave that glorious heart a glorious tomb
Worth Scotia's rental.

Old John, such stories were to me a proof
That 'neath the dimpling of the temporal tides
A power is working still in our behoof,
A primal power that in the world abides.
In virgins' hearts it lives, and tender brides
Confess it. Veil your crests, ye powers of evil!
It is an older power, and it derides
Your vain upheaval.

Old John, do you remember Injebreck,
And that fine day we went to get a load
Of perfumed larch? From many a ruddy fleck
The resin oozed and dropped upon the road;
And ever as we trudged you taught the code
Traditional of woodcraft. Night came sparkling
With all her gems, and devious to Tromode
The stream ran darkling.

But we the westward height laborious clomb ;
Then from Mount Rule descended on the Strang,
And saw afar the pleasant lights of home,
Whereat your cheering speech—"We'll nae be lang"!
Also a wondrous chirp of eld you sang,
Till, when we came to Braddan Bridge, the clinging
Of that inveterate awe enforced a pang
That stopped the singing.

Yet when we gained the vantage of the hill,
And breathed more freely on the gentler slope,
Then quickly we recovered, as men will :
For Life's sweet buoyancy with Death can cope,
Being strung by Nature for that genial scope :
And so, when you had ceased from your dejection,
You talked with me of God, and faith, and hope,
And resurrection.

'Twas thus I learned to love the various man,
Rich patterned, woven of all generous dyes,
Like to the tartan of some noble clan,
Blending the colours that alternate rise.
So ever 'tis refreshing to mine eyes
To look beyond convention's flimsy trammel,
And see the native tints, in anywise,
Of God's enamel.

Old John, you were not of the Calvinists ;
"The doctrine o' yElaction," you declared—
You gentlest of all gentle Methodists—
"A saul-destroying doctrine." Whoso dared
God's mercy limit, he must be prepared
For something awful, not propounded clearly,
But dark as deepest doom that Dante bared,
Or very nearly.

On Sunday morning early to the "class,"
Then Matins, as it's called in ritual puff
Correct, then Evensong—but let that pass:
Our curate frowns. Nor then had you enough;
But, with your waistcoat pocket full of snuff,
You scorned the flesh, suppressed the stomach's clamour,
And went where you could get "the rael stuff"
Absolved from grammar.

And who shall blame you, John? Our prayers are good—
Compact of precious fragments, passion-clips
Of many souls, cemented with the blood
Of suffering. So we kiss them with the lips
Of awful love; but when the irregular grips
Of zeal constrain the cleric breast or laic,
Into a thousand fiery shreds it rips
Our old mosaic.

And so it was with you, Old John! The form
Was excellent; but you were timely nursed
Upon a Cameronian lap, the storm
Of that great strife inherited: the thirst
For God was in you from the very first!
The rushing flood, the energy ecstatic,
O'erwhelmed you that you could not choose but burst
All bonds prelatic.

No gentler soul e'er took its earthward flight
From Heaven's high towers, or clove the ethereal blue
With softer wings, or full of purer light—

Sweet Saint Theresa, bathed in virgin dew,
Your sister was ; but Jenny Geddes was too !
The false Archbishop feared the accents surly
Of your firm voice—you were John Knox, and you
Balfour of Burley.

Then is it wonderful in me you found
Disciple apt for every changing mood ?
I also had a root in Scottish ground.
No tale of ancient wrong my spirit wooed
In vain : I loved the splendid fortitude,
Although we served in different battalions —
Your folk were Presbyterians, mine were lewd
Episcopalians.

What joy it was to you the day I came
To visit that dear home, no longer mine !
I sat belated, having seen the flame
Of sunset flash from well-known windows. Nine
Was struck upon the clock, and yet no sign
Of my departure ; then some admiration
Of what I purposed ; then I could divine
A consultation.

That I should sleep with you was their intent,
And so we slept, being comrades old and tried
It was to me a very sacrament,
As you lay hushed and reverent at my side.
Your comely portance filled my soul with pride
To think how human dignity surpasses
The estimate of those who "can't abide
The lower classes."

And, severed by a curtain on a string,
Slept Robert, and his wife, your daughter, slept ;
Slept little Beenie, and the bright-eyed thing

You Maggie called —she to her mother crept
And snuggled in the dark. The night wind swept
"Aboon the thatch"; came dawn, and touched each rafter
With tongue of gold; then from the bed I leapt
As light as laughter.

But I must "break my fast" before I went:
And so I sat, and shared the pleasant meal;
And all were up, and happy, and content;
And last you prayed. May Fashion ne'er repeal
That self-respect, those manners pure and leal!
My countrymen, I charge you never stain them:
But, as you love your Island's noblest weal,
Guard and maintain them.

O faithfullest! my debt to you is long:
Life's grave complexity around me grows.
From you it comes if in the busy throng
Some friends I have, and have not any foes;
And even now, when purple morning glows,
And I am on the hills, a night-worn watchman,
I see you in the centre of the rose,
Dear, brave, old Scotchman!

CHALSE A KILLEY

To Chalse in Heaven

So you are gone, dear Chalse!
Ah! well: it was enough—
The ways were cold, the ways were rough—

O Heaven! O home!
No more to roam—
Chalse, poor Chalse.

And now it's all so plain, dear Chalse!
So plain—
The wildered brain,
The joy, the pain—
The phantom shapes that haunted,
The half-born thoughts that daunted—
All, all is plain
Dear Chalse!
All is plain.

Yet where you're now, dear Chalse,
Have you no memory
Of land and sea,
Of vagrant liberty?
Through all your dreams
Come there no gleams
Of morning sweet and cool
On old Barrule?
Breathes there no breath,
Far o'er the hills of Death,
Of a soft wind that dallies
Among the Curragh sallies—
Shaking the perfumed gold-dust on the streams?
Chalse, poor Chalse!

Or is it all forgotten, Chalse?
A fever fit that vanished with the night
Has God's great light
Pierced through the veiled delusions,
The errors and confusions;

And pointed to the tablet, where
In quaint and wayward character,
As of some alien clime,
His name was graven all the time?
All the time!
O Chalse! poor Chalse.

Such music as you made, dear Chalse!
With that crazed instrument
That God had given you here for use—
You will not wonder now if it did loose
Our childish laughter, being writhen and bent
From native function—was it not, sweet saint?
But when such music ceases,
'Tis God that takes to pieces
The inveterate complication,
And makes a restoration
Most subtle in its sweetness,
Most strong in its completeness,
Most constant in its meetness;
And gives the absolute tone,
And so appoints your station
Before the throne—
Chalse, poor Chalse.

And yet while you were here, dear Chalse,
You surely had more joy than sorrow:
Even from your weakness you did borrow
A strength to mock
The frowns of fortune, to decline the shock
Of rigorous circumstance,
To weave around your path a dance
Of "airy nothings," Chalse; and while your soul,
Dear Chalse! was dark.

As an o'erwanèd moon from pole to pole,
Yet had you still an arc
Forlorn, a silvery rim
Of the same light wherein the cherubim
Bathe their glad brows, and veer
On circling wings above the starry sphere—
Chalse, poor Chalse.

Yes, you had joys, dear Chalse! as when forsooth,
Right valiant for the truth,
You crossed the Baldwin hills,
And at the Union Mills,
Inspired with sacred fury,
You helped good Parson Drury
To "put the *Romans* out,"
A champion brave and stout—
Ah! now, dear Chalse, of all the radiant host,
Who loves you most?
I think I know him, kneeling on his knees—
Is it Saint Francis of Assise?
Chalse, poor Chalse.

Great joy was yours, dear Chalse! when first I
met you
In that old Vicarage
That shelters under Bradda: we did get you
By stratagem most sage
Of youthful mischief—got you all unweeting
Of mirthful toys—
A merry group of girls and boys,
To hold a missionary meeting;
And you did stand upon a chair,
In the best parlour there;
And dear old Parson Corrin was from home,
And I did play a tune upon a comb;

And unto us
You did pronounce a speech most marvellous,
Dear Chalse! and then you said
And *sthrooghed*[1] the head—
"If there'll be no objection,
We'll now *purseed*[2] to the collection"—
Chalse, poor Chalse!

And do you still remember, Chalse,
How at the Dhoor[3]—
Near Ramsey, *to be sure*—
I got two painters painting in the chapel
To make with me a congregation?
And you did mount the pulpit, and did grapple
With a tremendous text, and warn the nation
Of drunkenness; and in your hand
Did wave an empty bottle, so that we,
By palpable typology,
Might understand—
Dear Chalse, you never had
An audience more silent or more sad!

And have you met him, Chalse,
Whom you did long to meet?
You used to call him *dear and sweet*—
Good Bishop Wilson—has he *taken you*
In hand, dear Chalse? And is he true,
And is he kind,
And do you tell him all your mind,
Dear Chalse—
All your mind?
And have you yet set up the press;
And is the type in readiness,

[1] Stroked. [2] Proceed.
[3] A well of "black water" on the Andreas Road.

Founded with gems
Of living sapphire, dipped
In blood of molten rubies, diamond-tipped?
And, *with the sanction of the Governor*,
Do you, a proud compositor,
Stand forth, and *prent the Hemns*?[1]—
Chalse, poor Chalse!

THE PEEL LIFE-BOAT

Of Charley Cain, the cox,
And the thunder of the rocks,
And the ship *St. George*—
How he balked the sea-wolf's gorge
Of its prey—
Southward bound from Norraway;
And the fury and the din,
And the horror and the roar,
Rolling in, rolling in,
Rolling in upon the dead lee-shore!

See the Harbour-master stands,
Cries—"Have you all your hands?"
Then, as an angel springs
With God's breath upon his wings,
She went;
And the black storm robe was rent
With the shout and with the din. . . .

And the castle walls were crowned,
And no woman lay in swound,

[1] Print the Hymns.

But they stood upon the height
Straight and stiff to see the fight,
For they knew
What the pluck of men can do:
With the fury and the din. . . .

"Lay aboard her, Charley lad!"
"Lay aboard her!—Are you mad?
With the bumping and the scamper
Of all this loose deck hamper,
And the yards
Dancing round us here like cards,"
With the fury and the din. . . .

So Charley scans the rout,
Charley knows what he's about,
Keeps his distance, heaves the line –
"Pay it out there true and fine!
Not too much, men!
Take in the slack, you Dutchmen!"
With the fury and the din. . . .

Now the hauser's fast and steady,
And the traveller rigged and ready.
Says Charley—"What's the lot?"
"Twenty-four." Then like a shot—
"Twenty-three,"
Says Charley, "'s all I see"—
With the fury and the din. . . .

"Not a soul shall leave the wreck,"
Says Charley, "till on deck
You bring the man that's hurt."
So they brought him in his shirt—
O, it's fain
I am for you, Charles Cain—
With the fury and the din. . . .

And the Captain and his wife,
And a baby! Odds my life!
Such a beauty! Such a prize!
And the tears in Charley's eyes.
Arms of steel,
For the honour of old Peel
Haul away amid the din. . . .

Sing ho! the seething foam!
Sing ho! the road for home!
And the hulk they've left behind,
Like a giant stunned and blind
With the loom
And the boding of his doom—
With the fury and the din. . . .

"Here's a child! don't let it fall!
Says Charley, "Nurse it, all!"
O the tossing of the breasts!
O the brooding of soft nests,
Taking turns,
As each maid and mother yearns
For the babe that 'scaped the din. . .

See the rainbow bright and broad!
Now, all men, thank ye God,
For the marvel and the token,
And the word that He hath spoken!
With Thee,
O Lord of all that be,
We have peace amid the din,
And the horror and the roar,
Rolling in, rolling in,
Rolling in upon the dead lee-shore.

CATHERINE KINRADE

None spake when Wilson stood before
The throne—
And He that sat thereon
Spake not; and all the presence-floor
Burnt deep with blushes, as the angels cast
Their faces downwards. Then at last,
Awe-stricken, he was 'ware
How on the emerald stair
A woman sat, divinely clothed in white,
And at her knees four cherubs bright,
That laid
Their heads within her lap. Then, trembling, he essayed
To speak:—"Christ's mother, pity me!"
Then answered she:—
"Sir, I am Catherine Kinrade."
Even so—the poor dull brain,
Drenched in unhallowed fire,
It had no vigour to restrain—
God's image trodden in the mire
Of impious wrongs—whom last he saw
Gazing with animal awe
Before his harsh tribunal, proved unchaste,
Incorrigible, woman's form defaced
To uttermost ruin by no fault of hers—
So gave her to the torturers;
And now—some vital spring adjusted,
Some faculty that rusted
Cleansed to legitimate use—
Some undeveloped action stirred, some juice

Of God's distilling dropt into the core
Of all her life—no more
In that dark grave entombed,
Her soul had bloomed
To perfect woman—swift celestial growth
That mocks our temporal sloth—
To perfect woman—woman made to honour,
With all the glory of her youth upon her.
And from her lips and from her eyes there flowed
A smile that lit all Heaven ; the angels smiled ;
God smiled, if that were smile beneath the state
that glowed
Soft purple—and a voice :—"Be reconciled!"
So to his side the children crept,
And Catherine kissed him, and he wept.
Then said a seraph :—"Lo! he is forgiven."
And for a space again there was no voice in Heaven.

GOB-NY-USHTEY

(Water's Mouth)

I saw a little stream to-day
That sprang right away
From the cornice of rock—
Sprang like a deer, not slid ;
And the Tritons to mock—
Old dissolute Tritons—"Hurroo!"
They said, "We'll teach him a thing or two,
This upland babe." And I've no doubt they did.
But, as he lightly fell, midway
His robe of bright spray

He flung in my face,
Then down to the soles and the cods
With his sweet young grace.
Ah, what will the stripling learn,
From those rude mates—that mountain burn,
What manners of th' extremely early gods?

FAILAND

HA, little one!
Would'st like a torrent run
That spurns the mountain steep,
And falls in thunder? O, brave leap! brave leap!
'Twas excellently done.
Nay, I am not in fun!
You silly thing, that you should slink
And hide among the cresses! only think!
Pooh! 'tis a very Nile! there, there! that's right!
Flash out again into the light!
Have at the biggest stone—O, nobly meant!
I swear it was magnificent!

And thus I chaffed the stream, but I was wrong:
He never dreamt of fountains
Rock-scooped in mighty mountains;
He never made pretence
To power; but in his own sweet innocence
He danced, and sang thereto a simple song;
And after that one frolic,
To sneer at which were well-nigh diabolic,
He sang it all day long.

PORTBURY

YES, you are weary, and it is most right—
This is a blessed light
Wherein you ask to sleep:
How soft it falls! How delicately creep
The perfumed airs upon your breast!
Sleep on! sleep on! rest! rest!

Ah, it was glorious fun up there,
You little devil-may-care!
Such flowers to kiss, such pebbles to chide,
Such crabbed old carls of roots to deride,
Flouting them with your saucy riot!
Yes, yes! But now be quiet!

For after all the stones were rough,
And you've had fun enough.
See! it is O, so peaceful here!
Ah! feel this lily—is it not most dear?
Coax it with curling of your liquid limbs!
And, as it delicately swims,
Let nothing but its shadow cumber
The lightness of your slumber!

The great sea calls—be still!
And fear not any ill!
For all the Loves will pet you,
Nor kindly Jove forget you,
When those bold Tritons with the rush
Of many arms seize you and make you blush!—
Ah, hush! hush! hush!

THE DHOON

"LEAP from the crags, brave boy!
The musing hills have kept thee long,
But they have made thee strong,
And fed thee with the fulness of their joy,
And given direction that thou might'st return
To me who yearn
At foot of this great steep—
Leap! leap!"

So the stream leapt
Into his mother's arms,
Who wept
A space,
Then calmed her sweet alarms,
And smiled to see him as he slept,
Wrapt in that dear embrace:
And with the brooding of her tepid breast
Cherished his mountain chillness—
O, then—what rest!
O, everywhere what stillness!

WASTWATER TO SCAWFELL

I LOVE to kiss thy feet
With tend'rest lip of wave;
To feel that thou art big and brave,
And beautiful and strong;
Nor any glare of lightning-sheet,
Nor thunder-crash, nor all the storms that rave
Combined, avail to do thee wrong.

Bare-breasted to the blast,
Thou art at grips with him
Steadfast, yet through each awful limb
I feel the rock-veins start,
And muscular thrillings darkly passed,
And rigid throes, and a pulsation dim,
And all the working of thy heart.

Me too he smites—I quiver,
Yet, 'neath the scourge, to thee
I cling, and kiss thee in an agony,
Of thy great love secure :
Love that is helpless to deliver,
Only it strengthens, whisp'ring unto me :—
"Endure, O friend!" and I endure.

Dear thus ; but even dearer
When on my waveless breast,
Smoothed glassy in a mirrored trance of rest,
Thy perfect shadow sleeps,
And, waxing clearer still and clearer,
Limns its fine edge till, all of thee possessed,
I faint within my yearning deeps.

Once, when the world was young,
To us at least unknown
All law of severance that dooms thee lone,
And me forbids to rise ;
When first I felt thy shadow flung,
I thought thyself descended from thy throne
To bless me with a swift surprise.

Fond thought! but mine no more ;
Ah, no! it was not thou!
The beldame years have preached me that enow.

But O, if thou couldst glide
Into my arms, how I would pour
Around thee sleeping, side, and breast, and brow—
Storm-furrowed brow, and breast, and side!

What would I do,
O God! if that were true!
With wreaths of diamond spray
I would bind thee every way—
O! I'd crown thee, and I'd drown thee,
And I'd bathe thee, and I'd swathe thee
With the swirling and the curling,
And the splashing and the flashing
Of my arms;
And I'd float to thee in bubbles,
And I'd woo thee in sweet troubles
Of a gurgling soft and reedy,
Of a rippling foamed and beady,
Till with a refluent sliding,
Till with a hushed subsiding,
I would hold thee in the hollows
Where the storm-trump never follows,
Never pierces with the clang of its alarms.

Be still, my heart, be still!
Dreams are but dreams, they say;
The ordered world is one both night and day,
And we are but the gear,
Nor have we aught of voice or will,
But, borne on her great zones, we must obey,
Nor move but with the moving sphere.

So, when in meek compliance,
I hear the distant roar

That comes of jubilant waves on ocean's shore,
When on the nether plain
The iron monster snorts defiance,
And boasts himself the slave of fate no more,
Exulting in his fiery pain,
I heed the challenges of change
Not once, nor once would leave
The dale, like that proud stream so proud t'achieve
His course of giddy mirth.
We ask not for such chartered range:
We are content with her to joy and grieve
Who is our mother, and did us conceive,
The children of the earth.

THE WELL

I AM a spring—
Why square me with a kerb?
Ah, why this measuring
Of marble limit? Why this accurate vault
Lest day assault,
Or any breath disturb?
And why this regulated flow
Of what 'tis good to feel, and what to know?
You have no right
To take me thus, and bind me to your use,
Screening me from the flight
Of all great wings that are beneath the heaven,
So that to me it is not given
To hold the image of the awful Zeus,
Nor any cloud or star
Emprints me from afar.

O cruel force,
That gives me not a chance
To fill my natural course ;
With mathematic rod
Economising God ;
Calling me to pre-ordered circumstance
Nor suffering me to dance
Over the pleasant gravel,
With music solacing my travel—
With music, and the baby buds that toss
In light, with roots and sippets of the moss !
A fount, a tank :
Yet through some sorry grate
A driblet faulters, till around the flank
Of burly cliffs it creeps ; then, silver-shooting,
Threads all the patient fluting
Of quartz, and violet-dappled slate :
A puny thing, on whose attenuate ripples
No satyr stoops to see
His broken effigy,
No naiad leans the languor of her nipples.
One faith remains—
That through what ducts soe'er,
What metamorphic strains,
What chymic filt'rings, I shall pass
To where, O God, Thou lov'st to mass
Thy rains upon the crags, and dim the sphere.
So, when night's heart with keenest silence thrills,
Take me, and weep me on the desolate hills !

ROMAN WOMEN

I

CLOSE by the Mamertine
Her eyes swooped into mine.
O Jove supreme!
What gleam
Of sovereignty! what hate—
Large, disproportionate!
What lust
August!
Imperial state
Of full-orbed throbbings solved
In vast and dissolute content—
Love-gluts revolved
In lazy rumination, rent,
As then, by urgence of the immediate sting!
The tiger spring
Is there; the naked strife
Of sinewy gladiators, knife
Slant-urged, Locusta drugs,
Suburran rangings, Messalina hugs;
Neronic crapula-pangs
I' the dizzy morning; gangs
Of captives:—"Pretty men enough,
Eh, Livia?" Puff
Of lecherous torches; ooze
Of gutter-creeping gore; the booze
Gnathic, Trimalchial; hot hiss
Of *leno* in the lobby—This,
And more. No wonder if her brow
Is arched to empire even now!

No wonder
If bated thunder
Sleeps in her silken lashes!
If flashes
Of awful splendour light the purple mud
That clogs the spherèd depths palatial!
No wonder if a blotch of blood
Lies murd'rous in the centre of the ball!

II

That look was Heaven or Hell,
As you shall please to take it—
Enormity of love, or lust so fell
The Devil could not slake it—
And so—and so—
She passes—I shall never know.

III

Ah! now
I have you, Julia, Brutus' mate,
Such lip, such brow,
Such port, such gait:
A body, where the act of every sense
Compounds a final excellence—
Ah, glorious woman! Whence
This perfect good,
If not from juice
Of finer blood,
Perfumed with use
Of ardours pure, intense
With strains of sweet control?
Clear soul,
If unpropitious starr'd,

You wear the fitting vesture,
You have the native gesture,
And your most wanton thought mounts guard
On chastity's fair fence.

IV

Woman, a word with you!
Round-ribbed, large-flanked,
Broad-shouldered (God be thanked!),
Face fair and free,
And pleasant for a man to see—
I know not whom you love; but—hark! be true:
Partake his honest joys;
Cling to him, grow to him, make noble boys
For Italy.

V

Pomegranate, orange, rose,
Chewed to a paste
(Her flesh);
A miscellaneous nose,
No waist;
Mouth ript and ragg'd,
Ears nipt and jagg'd,
As fresh
From bull-dog grapplings; tongue
Beet-root, crisp, strong,
Now curled against the teeth,
Lip-cleaving now, like flower from sheath.
Now fix'd, now vibrant, blowing spray
Of spittle on the King's highway.

VI

Pretty? I think so;
Crushed, I admit it, and crumpled and bruised,

And smashed out of shape,
The poor little ape,
And sorely and sadly abused
Yes, I should say so—
Like a streamlet defiled at the source,
Condemned in advance—
Not a ghost of a chance—
Invertebrate morals, of course!

Pretty? yes, pretty—
For the sighs and the sobs and the tears
Have got mixed with the mesh
Of her wonderful flesh,
And leavened the growth of the years.

Pretty, and more—
For she sighs not, and sobs not, nor weeps;
But the sobs and the sighs
And the tears of her eyes
Dissolve in the physical deeps.
And they soften and sweeten the whole,
And in abject submission
To any condition
She fashions the ply of her soul.

VII

Good wife, good mother—yes, I know.
But what a glow
Of elemental fires!
What breadth, what stately flow
Of absolute desires—
How bound
To household task
And daily round,
It boots not ask!

Good mother, and good wife—
These women seem to live suspended life.
As lakes, dark-gleaming till the night is done,
Expect the sun,—
So these,
That wont to hold Jove's offspring on their knees,
Take current odds,
Accept life's lees,
And wait returning Gods.

VIII

Ah! naughty little girl,
With teeth of pearl,
You exquisite little brute,
So young, so dissolute—
Ripe orange brushed
From an o'erladen tree, chance-crushed
And bruised and battered on the street,
And yet so merry and so sweet!
Ah, child, don't scoff—
Yes, yes, I see—you lovely wretch, be off!

IX

This is the Forum of Augustus—see
The continuity
Of all these Forums, and the size—
(*By Jove, those eyes!*).

Three pillars of the peristyle—that's all;
A fragment of the wall;
Some doubtful traces of the cella—
(*Down the Bonella!*).

Corinthian capitals—observe how fine
The helices entwine—
Your Bädeker a *minutino*—
(*Ha! the Baccino!*).

The Arco de' Pantani shows the ground
Has risen all around.
Of course you know we're far above the level
Of—(*Gone? The Devil!*).

Bädeker tells how many feet we stand
Above old Rome. He's grand!
He is so plain, is Bädeker—
(*Again she's there!*).

I really—'pon my word, you know, this book
This Bädeker—(*Look! look!*)—
This English Bädeker's so plain—
(*She's there again!*).

You don't seem quite to—(*What a heavenly boddice!*)—
You don't—(*A perfect goddess!*)—
I mean, you seem a bit *distrait*—
(*O, blue! O, green! O—blazes—Fire away!*).

X

"You seem so strange to me,
You merman from the Northern sea"—
"A barnacle from Noah's ark?"
"Well—yes—a sort of shark!"
"Ah, blow then, darling, blow!
Blow in my ears, and let the warm breath flow,

And search the inmost vault
Of my sad brain. Blow, love—
Blow *in* the cooing of the dove,
Blow *out* the singing of the salt!"

XI

A little maiden, fifteen years or under—
And, as the curtain swings with heavy lurch,
Behold, she stands within St. Peter's Church—
O wonder! wonder! wonder!

And yet not so—her birthright rather seems it
She claims, whose breast the brooding sunshine warms
To absolute sense of colours and of forms—
Her birthright 'tis she deems it.

Or nothing deems—but, very sweet and grave,
Yet proud withal to be at last in Rome,
And see the shops, and see St. Peter's Dome,
She passes up the nave.

And if some angel spreads a silver wing
I know not—Visibly accompanying her
Are but her mother and her grandmother—
The lovely little thing!

Such soil, such children, representing clearly
The land they live in; so that if this pet
Of subtlest variance had the alphabet,
You'd think it nature merely.

And if, where stemming crags the torrent shatter,
She stood before the sunlit waterfall,
And wrapp'd the rainbow round her like a shawl,
It were a simple matter.

Now Mary and her dead Son—she has seen them :—
"Yes, darling, wrought by Michael Angelo"!
And now, too short to reach to Peter's toe,
They lift her up between them ;

And, having kissed, she soft unclasps her mother,
As graduated woman from to-day ;
And blushing thinks, how Seppe's sick till they
Shall marry one another.

And when to-night her Seppe comes to meet her,
And, for the one poor kiss she gave to Peter,
Exacts a vengeful twenty, if she can
For kisses, she will tell him all the plan
Of Peter's Church, and *What a tiny kiss*
It was, "Seppino ; not like this, or this!"
And how, hard by, the hungry Englishman
Looked just as if he'd eat her!

XII

Why does she stare at you like that? The glow
Flew sheeted,
As from the furnace seven-times heated
For Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego.
Is it immediate sense
Of difference?
Of complement? And so—
While we want sun and grapes,
This burning creature gapes
For ice and snow!

XIII

O Englishwoman on the Pincian,
I love you not, nor ever can—
Astounding woman on the Pincian!

I know your mechanism well-adjusted,
I see your mind and body have been trusted
To all the proper people:
I see you straight as is a steeple;
I see you are not old;
I see you are a rich man's daughter;
I see you know the use of gold,
But also know the use of soap-and-water;
And yet I love you not, nor ever can—
Distinguished woman on the Pincian!

You have no doubt of your preëminence,
Nor do I make pretence
To challenge it for my poor little slattern,
Whose costume dates from Saturn—
My wall-flower with the long, love-draggled fringes:
But then the controversy hinges
On higher forms; and you must bear
Comparisons more noble. Stare, yes, stare—
I love you not, nor ever can,
You peerless woman on the Pincian.

No, you'll not see her on the Pincian,
My Roman woman, wife of Roman man!
Elsewhere you may—
And she is bright as is the day;
And she is sweet, that honest workman's wife
Fulfilled with bounteous life:
Her body balanced like a spring
In equipoise of perfect natural grace;
Her soul unquestioning
Of ought but genial cares; her face,
Her frock, her attitude, her pace
The confluence of absolute harmonies—

And you, my Lady Margaret,
Pray what have you to set
'Gainst splendours such as these?
No, I don't love you, and I never can,
Pretentious woman on the Pincian!

But morals—beautiful serenity
Of social life, the sugar and the tea,
The flannels and the soup, the coals,
The patent recipés for saving souls,
And other things: the chill dead sneer
Conventional, the abject fear
Of form-transgressing freedom—I admit
That you have these; but love you not a whit
The more, nor ever can,
Alarming female on the Pincian!

Come out, O woman, from this blindness!
Rome, too, has women full of loving-kindness,
Has noble women, perfect in all good
That makes the glory of great womanhood—
But they are Women! I have seen them bent
On gracious errand; seen how goodness lent
The grave, ineffable charm
That guards from possibility of harm
A creature so divinely made,
So softly swayed
With native gesture free—
The melting-point of passionate purity.
Yes—soup and flannels too,
And tickets for them—just like you—
Tracts, books, and all the innumerable channels
Through which your bounty acts—
Well—not the tracts,
But certainly the flannels—

Her I must love, but you I never can,
Unlovely woman on the Pincian.

And yet—
Remarkable woman on the Pincian!—
We owe a sort of debt
To you, as having gone with us of old
To those bleak islands, cold
And desolate and grim,
Upon the Ocean's rim,
And shared their horrors with us—not that then
Our poor bewildered ken
Could catch the further issues, knowing only
That we were very lonely!
Ah well, you did us service in your station;
And how the progress of our civilisation
Has made you quite so terrible
It boots not ask; for still
You gave us stalwart scions,
Suckled the young sea-lions,
And smiled infrequent, glacial smiles
Upon the sulky isles—
For this and all His mercies——stay at home!
Here are the passion-flowers!
Here are the sunny hours!
O Pincian woman, do not come to Rome!

IN MEMORIAM

HALF-MAST the flag by sweet St. Mary's shore,
Half-mast the schooner in Port Erin bay:
Death has been with us in the night, of prey
Insatiate from a fold thrice robbed before;

And now he climbs to me upon the hoar
And ruinous rock, and shrouds the gladsome day
With sullen gloom, nor any word will say
That might to strength my sinking heart restore.
Speak, Death, O, speak! What high command restrains
The dark disclosure? Is it thine own will
Thou workest, I adjure thee, shape of fear?
Then from the awful face a shadow wanes,
And, clad in robes of light unspeakable,
God's loveliest angel sits beside me here.

SONG

Look at me, sun, ere thou set
In the far sea;
From the gold and the rose and the jet
Look full at me!

Leave on my brow a trace
Of tenderest light;
Kiss me upon the face,
Kiss for good-night.

DUNOON

Little Maggie sitting in the pew,
Eyes of light and lips of dew!
What is that to you? what is that to you—
Little Maggie sitting in the pew?
Grinding like a saw-mill,
Worthy Doctor "Cawmill,"

What has he to do,
He so lank and prosy,
With Maggie plump and rosy—
Little Maggie sitting in the pew?
Is burd Maggie stupid?
No, by sweet Saint Cupid!
Rhythmic little sinner,
All that is within her
Chiming like a psalm
In the stellar calm;
Gracious warmth of blood
Making fancies bud
With a tender folly
Into belled corollæ;
Radiating gleams
Of half-conscious dreams,
Floating her on blisses
Of potential kisses;
Filling all the presence
With a balmy pleasance,
With a kind confusion,
With a quick elusion
Of all ponderous matter
That would fain come at her—
What is that to you,
Little Maggie, little Maggie, sitting in the pew?
Cubic, orthodox,
Sink the ordered blocks:
Doctrinal adamant,
Riven with the fiery rant
And hammered with the hammer of John Knox;
Cemented with the cant
Of glutinous emotion;
Riveted with logic
Hard-gripped, presbyterous,

Something, mayhap, to us!
But Maggie, with a "mawgic"
Of which we have no notion,
Upborne upon the tide
Of her young life, has power to hide,
With unbroken sweetness
With a soul-completeness,
All the rock and rubble;
Knowing of no trouble;
Fleckèd only
With shadows of those lofty things and lonely,
That from the seventh sphere
Pencil their diamond traces
Nowhere but on the mere
Of hearts that stir not from their places.

THE LAUGH

An empty laugh, I heard it on the road
Shivering the twilight with its lance of mirth;
And yet why empty? Knowing not its birth,
This much I know, that it goes up to God;
And if to God, from God it surely starts,
Who has within Himself the secret springs
Of all the lovely, causeless, unclaimed things,
And loves them in His very heart of hearts.
A girl of fifteen summers, pure and free,
Æolian, vocal to the lightest touch
Of fancy's winnowed breath—Ah, happy such
Whose life is music of the eternal sea!
Laugh on, laugh loud and long, O merry child,
And be not careful to unearth a cause:
Thou art serenely placed above our laws,
And we in thee with God are reconciled.

"NE SIT ANCILLÆ"

Poor little Teignmouth slavey,
Squat, but rosy!
Slatternly, but cosy!
A humble adjunct of the British navy,
A fifth-rate dabbler in the British gravy—
How was I mirrored? In what spiritual dress
Appeared I to your struggling consciousness?

Thump! bump!
A dump
Of first a knife and then a fork!
Then plump
A mustard-pot! Then slump, stump, frump,
The plates
Like slates—
And lastly fearful wrestling with a cork!
And so I thought:—"Poor thing!
She has not any wing
To waft her from the grease,
To give her soul release
From this dull sphere
Of baccy, beef, and beer."

But, as it happed,
I spoke of Chagford, Chagford by the moor,
Sweet Chagford town. Then, pure
And bright as Burton tapped
By master hand,
Then, red as is a peach,
My little maid found speech—
Gave me to understand

She knew "them parts";
And to our several hearts
We stood elate,
As each revealed to each
A mate—
She stood, I sate,
And saw within her eyes
The folly of an infinite surprise.

WHITEHAVEN HARBOUR

O, CAN'T she? Listen! There's a volley!
Stand to your guns, my Ipswich boy!
Chain-shot ahoy!
"Ah, ain't she jolly"
(Young Ipswich telegraphing
To us upon the quay)!
"Some credit chaffing
With her!" Decidedly—
"The gen'lemen are looking." Yes, we are,
My noble Ipswich tar—
"Ain't her eyes brown?"
(Says telegraph)
"Ah, can't she laugh?
And ain't she all so nice and pert?"
Yes, yes! stand up and flirt!
Flirt for the honour of your native town!
Flirt! flirt! my man of Ipswich. Not so bad!
A good sufficient lad!
See how the strong young hearts
Dance to the tongue-tips; lightning darts
From eye to eye:
The maiden is not shy!

See the two Manxmen on the schooner there,
Who stare
With all their souls in silent admiration
Of such a very excellent flirtation!
Quite out of it—
Those Manxmen—wait a bit—
Poor fellows! Shall we hail them? No?
Ah well, let's go.

IBANT OBSCURÆ

To-night I saw three maidens on the beach,
Dark-robed descending to the sea,
So slow, so silent of all speech,
And visible to me
Only by that strange drift-light, dim, forlorn,
Of the sun's wreck and clashing surges born.
Each after other went,
And they were gathered to his breast—
It seemed to me a sacrament
Of some stern creed unblest:
As when to rocks, that cheerless girt the bay,
They bound thy holy limbs, Andromeda.

ST. BEE'S HEAD

I have seen cliffs that met the ocean foe
As a black bison, with his crouching front
And neck back-coiled, awaits the yelping hunt,
That reck not of his horns protruding low.

And others I have seen with calm disdain
O'erlook the immediate strife, and gaze afar:
Eternity was in that gaze; the jar
Of temporal broil assailed not its domain.

Some cliffs are full of pity: in the sweep
Of their bluff brows a kindly tolerance waits,
And smiles upon the petulant sea, that rates,
And fumes, and scolds against the patient steep.

And some are joyous with a hearty joy,
And in mock-earnest wage the busy fight:
So may you see a giant with delight
Parrying the buffets of a saucy boy!

Remonstrant others stand—a wild surprise
Glares from their crests against the insolent throng;
Half frightened, half indignant at the wrong,
They look appealing to those heedless skies.

And other some are of a sleepy mood,
Who care not if the tempest does its worst:
What is't to them if bounding billows burst,
Or winds assail them with their jeerings rude?

But like not unto any one of these
Is that tall crag, that northward guards the bay,
And stands, a watchful sentry, night and day
Above the pleasant downs of old St. Bee's.

Straight-levelled as the bayonet's dread array,
His shelves abide the charge. Come one, come all!
The blustering surges at his feet shall fall
And writhe and sob their puny lives away!

AN OXFORD IDYLL

Ah little mill, you're rumbling still,
Ah sunset flecked with gold!
Ah deepening tinge, ah purple fringe
Of lilac as of old!
Ah hawthorn hedge, ah light-won pledge
Of kisses warm and plenty,
When she was true, and twenty-two,
And I was two-and-twenty.
I don't know how she broke her vow—
She said that I was "horty";
And there's the mill a goin' still,
And I am five-and-forty.
And sooth to tell, 'twas just as well,
Her aitches were uncertain;
Her ways though nice, not point-device;
Her father liked his "Burton."
But there's a place you cannot trace,
So spare the fond endeavour—
A cloudless sky, where Kate and I
Are twenty-two for ever.

MAGDALEN WALK.

SCARLETT ROCKS

I THOUGHT of life, the outer and the inner,
As I was walking by the sea:
How vague, unshapen this, and that, though thinner,
Yet hard and clear in its rigidity.

Then took I up the fragment of a shell,
And saw its accurate loveliness,
And searched its filmy lines, its pearly cell,
And all that keen contention to express
A finite thought. And then I recognised
God's working in the shell from root to rim,
And said :—"He works till He has realised—
O Heaven! if I could only work like Him!"

LIME STREET

You might have been as lovely as the dawn,
Had household sweetness nurtured you, and arts
Domestic, and the strength which love imparts
To lowliness, and chastened ardour drawn
From vital sap that burgeons in the brawn
Around the dreadful arms of Hercules,
And shapes the curvature of Dian's knees,
And has its course in lilies of the lawn.
Even now your flesh is soft and full, defaced
Although it be, and bruised. Unblenched your eyes
Meet mine, as misinterpreting their call,
Then sink, reluctant, forced to recognise
That there are men whose look is not unchaste—
O God! the pain! the horror of it all!

HOTWELLS

Is it her face that looks from forth the glare
Of those dull stony eyes?
Her face! that used to light with meek surprise,
If I but said that she was fair!

Can it have come to this, since at the gate
Her lips between the bars
Fluttered irresolute to mine, for it was late
Beneath the misty stars!

It was our last farewell, our last farewell—
O heaven above!
And now she is a fearful thing of Hell—
My dove! my dove!
A hollow thing carved rigid on the shell
Of her that was my love!

Yet, if the soul remain,
There crouched and dumb behind the obdurate mask,
This would I ask:—
Kill her, O God! that so, the flesh being slain,
Her soul my soul may be again.

TO K. H.

O FAR withdrawn into the lonely West,
To whom those Irish hills are as a grave
Cairn-crowned, the dead sun's monument,
And this fair English land but vaguely guessed—
Thee, lady, by the melancholy wave
I greet, where salt winds whistle through the bent,
And harsh sea-holly buds beneath thy foot are pressed.

What is thy thought? 'Tis not the obvious scene
That holds thee with its grand simplicity
Of natural forms. Thou musest rather

What larger life may be, what richer sheen
Of social gloss in lands beyond the sea,
What nobler cult than where, around thy father,
The silent fishers pray in chapel small and mean.

Yes, thou art absent far—thy soul has slipt
The visual bond, and thou art lowly kneeling
Upon a pavement with the sacred kisses
Of emerald and ruby gleamings lipped;
And down the tunnelled nave the organ, pealing,
Blows music-storm, and with far-floating blisses
Gives tremor to the bells, and shakes the dead men's
crypt.

This is thy thought; for this thou heav'st the sigh.
Yet, lady, look around thee! hast thou not
The life of real men, the home,
The tribe, and for a temple that old sky,
Whereto the sea intones the polyglot
Of water-pipes antiphonal, and the dome,
Round-arched, goes up to God in lapis lazuli?

CLIFTON

I'm here at Clifton, grinding at the mill
My feet for thrice nine barren years have trod;
But there are rocks and waves at Scarlett still,
And gorse runs riot in Glen Chass—thank God!

Alert, I seek exactitude of rule,
I step, and square my shoulders with the squad;
But there are blaeberries on old Barrule,
And Langness has its heather still—thank God!

There is no silence here: the truculent quack
Insists with acrid shriek my ears to prod,
And, if I stop them, fumes; but there's no lack
Of silence still on Carraghyn—thank God!

Pragmatic fibs surround my soul, and bate it
With measured phrase, that asks the assenting nod;
I rise, and say the bitter thing, and hate it—
But Wordsworth's castle's still at Peel—thank God!

O broken life! O wretched bits of being,
Unrhythmic, patched, the even and the odd!
But Bradda still has lichens worth the seeing,
And thunder in her caves—thank God! thank God!

FIVES'-COURT

SOMETIMES at night I stand within a court
Where I have play'd by day;
And still the walls are vibrant with the sport,
And still the air is pulsing with the sway
Of agile limbs that now, their labours o'er,
To healthful sleep their strength resign—
But how of those who play'd with me langsyne
And sleep for evermore?

THE LILY-POOL

WHAT sees our mailie[1] in the lily-pool,
What sees she with that large surprise?
What sees our mailie in the lily-pool
With all the violet of her big eyes—
Our mailie in the lily-pool?

[1] A cow without horns.

She sees herself within the lily-pool,
Herself in flakes of brown and white—
Herself beneath the slab that is the lily-pool,
The green and liquid slab of light
With cups of silver dight,
Stem-rooted in the depths of amber night
That hold the hollows of the lily-pool—
Our own dear lily-pool!

And does she gaze into the lily-pool
As one that is enchanted?
Or does she try the cause to find
How the reflection's slanted,
That sleeps within the lily-pool?
Or does she take it all for granted,
With the sweet natural logic of her kind?
The lazy logic of the lily-pool,
Our own bright, innocent, stupid lily-pool!

She knows that it is nice—our lily-pool:
She likes the water-rings around her knees;
She likes the shadow of the trees,
That droop above the lily-pool;
She likes to scatter with a silly sneeze
The long-legged flies that skim the lily-pool—
The peaceful-sleeping, baby lily-pool.

So may I look upon the lily-pool,
Nor ever in the slightest care
Why I am there;
Why upon land and sea
Is ever stamped the inevitable me;
But rather say with that most gentle fool:—
"How pleasant is this lily-pool!

How nice and cool!
Be off, you long-legged flies! O what a spree!
To drive the flies from off the lily-pool!
From off this most sufficient, absolute lily-pool!"

"NOT WILLING TO STAY"

I saw a fisher bold yestreen
At his cottage by the bay,
And I asked how he and his had been,
While I was far away.
But when I asked him of the child
With whom I used to play,
The sunniest thing that ever smiled
Upon a summer's day—
Then said that fisher bold to me—
And turned his face away:—
"She was not willing to stay with us—
She was not willing to stay."

"But, Evan, she was brave and strong,
And blithesome as the May;
And who would do her any wrong,
Our darling of the bay?"
His head was low, his breath was short,
He seemed as he would pray,
Nor answer made in any sort
That might his grief betray;
Save once again that fisher bold
Turned, and to me did say:—
"She was not willing to stay with us,
She was not willing to stay."

Then I looked upon his pretty cot,
So neat in its array,
And I looked upon his garden-plot
With its flowers so trim and gay;
And I said:—"He hath no need of me
To help him up the brae;
God worketh in his heart, and He
Will soon let in the day."
So I left him there, and sought yon rock
Where leaps the salt sea-spray;
For ah! how many have lost their loves
That were "not willing to stay" with them,
That were not willing to stay!

ECCLESIASTES

We came from church, she from the Down was coming;
She with a branch of may,
We laden with persistence of the humming
Wherein men think they pray;
She winning to her faded face a beauty
From the kissed buds, we having heard "the duty
Performed," with needful prayer-book thumbing;
We proper, she so gay.

Yet, as we met, her little joy was dashed
By our spruce decency;
She hung her head as who must be abashed
In her poor liberty;
Forgetting how in that damp city cellar
The sick child pines, whom none but God did tell her
To bring bright flowers Himself has splashed
With dew for such as she.

Or was it but the natural rebound
To what thou truly art,
O worn with life! whose soul-depths He would sound,
And prick upon His chart?
Is this thy "service"? Stay! for very grace!
One moment stay, and lift the faded face!
O woman! woman! thou hast found
The way into my heart.

INDWELLING

If thou couldst empty all thyself of self,
Like to a shell dishabited,
Then might He find thee on the Ocean shelf,
And say—"This is not dead,"—
And fill thee with Himself instead.
But thou art all replete with very *thou*,
And hast such shrewd activity,
That, when He comes, He says:—"This is enow
Unto itself—'Twere better let it be:
It is so small and full, there is no room for Me."

SALVE!

To live within a cave—it is most good.
But, if God make a day,
And some one come, and say:—
"Lo! I have gathered faggots in the wood!"
E'en let him stay,
And light a fire, and fan a temporal mood!

So sit till morning! When the light is grown
That he the path can read,
Then bid the man God-speed!
His morning is not thine; yet must thou own
They have a cheerful warmth—those ashes on the stone.

IN MEMORIAM

Paul Bridson

Take him, O Braddan, for he loved thee well—
Take him, kind mother of my own dear dead!
And let him lay his head
On thy soft breast,
And rest—
Rest.

He loved thee well; and thee, my father, thee
Also he loved. O, meet him! reassure
That heart thou prov'dst so pure—
Whisper release!
And peace—
Peace!

O countrymen, believe me! here is laid
A Manxman's heart the simplest and the truest:
O Spring, when thou renewest
Thy sunny hours,
Bring flowers—
Flowers!
And bring them of thy sweetest
And bring them of thy meetest
And, till God's trumpet wake him,
Take him, O Braddan, take him!

IN MEMORIAM: A. F.

Ob. Oct. 12, 1879

Aug. 1875

Bright skies, bright sea—
All happy things
That, borne on wings,
Cleave the long distance, glad and free—
A boat—swift swirls
Of foam-wake—boys and girls
And innocence and laughter—She
Was there, and was so happy; and I said:—
"God bless the children!"

Oct. 1879

Dead!

Dead, say you? "Yes, the last sweet rose
Is gathered"—Close, O close,
O, gently, gently, very gently close
Her little book of life, and seal it up
To God, who gave, who took—O bitter cup!
O bell!
O folding grave—O mother, it is well—
Yes, it is well. He holds the key
That opens all the mysteries; and He
Has blessed our children—it is well.

CANTICLE

When all the sky is pure
My soul takes flight,
Serene and sure,
Upward—till at the height
She weighs her wings,
And sings.

But when the heaven is black,
And west-winds sigh,
Beat back, beat back,
She has no strength to try
The drifting rain
Again.

So cheaply baffled! see!
The field is bare—
Behold a tree—
Is't not enough? Sit there,
Thou foolish thing,
And sing!

WHITE FOXGLOVE

White foxglove, by an angle in the wall,
Secluded, tall,
No vulgar bees
Consult you, wondering
If such a dainty thing
Can give them ease.
Yet what was that? Sudden a breeze

From the far moorland sighed,
And you replied,
Quiv'ring a moment with a thrill
Sweet, but ineffable.

Was it a kiss that sought you from the bowers
Of happier flowers,
And did not heed
Accessible loveliness,
And with a quaint distress
Hinted the need,
And paused and trembled for its deed,
And so you trembled, too,
No roseate hue
Revealing how the alarmèd sense
Blushed quick—intense?

Ah me!
Such kisses are for roses in the prime,
For braid of lime,
For full-blown blooms,
For ardent breaths outpoured
Obvious, or treasure stored
In honied rooms
Of rare delight, in which the looms
Of nature still conspire
To sate desire.
Not such are you beside the wall,
Cloistered and virginal.

'Twas your wild purple sisters there that passed
Unseen, and cast
The spell. They hold
The vantage of the heights,
And in you they have rights,

And they are bold:
They know not ever to be cold
Or coy, but they would play
With you alway.
Wherefore their little sprites a-wing
Make onslaught from the ling.

So spake I to the foxglove in my mood,
But was not understood.
Rather she shrank, and in a tenfold whiteness
Condemned what must have seemed to her my lightness.

OCTAVES

I KNOW a weaver and his wife,
And he is fair, and she is dark—
That breeds no strife
Within their peaceful ark.
The fairest man in all our town
Is he, light-flaxen, with a *plus*
Of marigold; her brown
Is brown of Stradivarius.

She keeps the humblest kind of shop,
Sells "goodies" to the little ones,
The knob, the drop
Acidulous; he runs
The timely threads, the boding tints
He summons in accordant row;
Babes buying peppermints
Observe the gath'ring purpose grow.

Hums the dull loom ; I enter ; pauses
The shopping, and the weaving. Straight
Her loud "O Lawses!"
Proclaim me designate
The erst beloved. I feel the dribble
Of fire volcanic in my soul
Long quenched—*Cumæan Sibyl?*
Nay, but the Delphic aureole!

Wrinkled and wizen? Every line
Is furrowed with sweet longings ; flames
Disused entwine
Our hearts ; the once dear names,
The ties no fateful force can sunder,
Recur. Unthought occasion wiles
Our lips ; the children wonder,
I hesitate, the weaver smiles.

POETS AND POETS

He fishes in the night of deep sea pools :
For him the nets hang long and low,
Cork-buoyed and strong ; the silver-gleaming schools
Come with the ebb and flow
Of universal tides, and all the channels glow.

Or, holding with his hand the weighted line,
He sounds the languor of the neaps,
Or feels what current of the springing brine
The cord divergent sweeps,
The throb of what great heart bestirs the middle deeps.

Thou also weavest meshes, fine and thin,
And leaguer'st all the forest ways ;
But of that sea and the great heart therein
Thou knowest nought : whole days
Thou toil'st, and hast thy end—good store of pies and jays.

OPIFEX

As I was carving images from clouds,
And tinting them with soft ethereal dyes
Pressed from the pulp of dreams, one comes, and cries :—
" Forbear ! " and all my heaven with gloom enshrouds.

" Forbear ! Thou hast no tools wherewith to essay
The delicate waves of that elusive grain :
Wouldst have due recompense of vulgar pain ?
The potter's wheel for thee, and some coarse clay !

" So work, if work thou must, O humbly skilled !
Thou hast not known the Master ; in thy soul
His spirit moves not with a sweet control ;
Thou art outside, and art not of the guild."

Thereat I rose, and from his presence passed,
But, going, murmured :—" To the God above,
Who holds my heart, and knows its store of love,
I turn from thee, thou proud iconoclast."

Then on the shore God stooped to me, and said :—
" He spake the truth : even so the springs are set
That move thy life, nor will they suffer let,
Nor change their scope ; else, living, thou wert dead.

"This is thy life: indulge its natural flow,
And carve these forms. They yet may find a place
On shelves for them reserved. In any case,
I bid thee carve them, knowing what I know."

IN MEMORIAM: J. MACMEIKIN

Died April 1883

Excellent Manxman, Scotia gave you birth,
But you were ours, being apt to take the print
Of island forms, the mood, the tone, the tint,
Nor missed the ripples of the larger mirth.
A lovely soul has sought the silent firth;
Yet haply on our shores you still may hint
A delicate presence, though no visible dint
Betrays where you have touched the conscious earth.
You walk with our loved "Chalse"; you help him speak
A gracious tongue, to us not wholly clear,
And sing the "Hymns"—fond dream that wont to dwell
In his confusion. Friend of all things weak,
Go down to that sweet soil you held so dear!
Go up to God, and joys unspeakable!

"GOD IS LOVE"

At Derby Haven in the sweet Manx land
A little girl had written on the sand
This legend:—"God is love." But, when I said:—
"What means this writing?" thus she answered:—

"It's father that's at say,
And I come here to pray,
And . . . God is love." My eyes grew dim—
Blest child! in Heaven above
Your angel sees the face of Him
Whose name is love.

THE INTERCEPTED SALUTE

A LITTLE maiden met me in the lane,
And smiled a smile so very fain,
So full of trust and happiness,
I could not choose but bless
The child, that she should have such grace
To laugh into my face.

She never could have known me; but I thought
It was the common joy that wrought
Within the little creature's heart,
As who should say:—"Thou art
As I; the heaven is bright above us;
And there is God to love us.
And I am but a little gleeful maid,
And thou art big, and old, and staid;
But the blue hills have made thee mild
As is a little child.
Wherefore I laugh that thou may'st see—
O, laugh! O, laugh with me!"

A pretty challenge! Then I turned me round,
And straight the sober truth I found.
For I was not alone; behind me stood,
Beneath his load of wood,

He that of right the smile possessed—
Her father manifest.

O, blest be God! that such an overplus
Of joy is given to us:
That that sweet innocent
Gave me the gift she never meant,
A gift secure and permanent!
For, howsoe'er the smile had birth,
It is an added glory on the earth.

METABOΛH

THE fashions change, for change is dear to men.
"Πάντων γλυκύτατον μεταβολή,"
Opined the Greek who had the widest ken:—
"Change of all things that be
Is sweetest." Yet since Leda's egg swans strive
To innovate no curvature on that,
And gannets dive as Noah saw them dive
O'er sunken Ararat.

JESSIE

WHEN Jessie comes with her soft breast,
And yields the golden keys,
Then is it as if God caressed
Twin babes upon His knees—
Twin babes that, each to other pressed,
Just feel the Father's arms, wherewith they both are blessed.

But when I think if we must part,
And all this personal dream be fled—
O, then my heart! O, then my useless heart!
Would God that thou wert dead—
A clod insensible to joys or ills—
A stone remote in some bleak gully of the hills!

A WISH

Of two things one: with Chaucer let me ride,
And hear the Pilgrims' tales; or, that denied,
Let me with Petrarch in a dew-sprent grove
Ring endless changes on the bells of love.

DANTE AND ARIOSTO

If Dante breathes on me his awful breath,
I rise and go; but I am sad as death—
I go; but, turning, who is that I see?
I whisper:—"Ariosto, wait for me!"

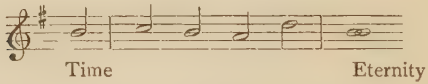
BOCCACCIO

Boccaccio, for you laughed all laughs that are—
The Cynic scoff, the chuckle of the churl,
The laugh that ripples over reefs of pearl,
The broad, the sly, the hugely jocular;
Men call you lewd, and coarse, allege you mar
The music that, withdrawn your ribald skirl,

Were sweet as note of mavis or of merle—
Wherefore they frown, and rate you at the bar.
One thing is proved: To count the sad degrees
Upon the Plague's dim dial, catch the tone
Of a great death that lies upon a land,
Feel nature's ties, yet hold with steadfast hand
The diamond, you are three that stand alone—
You, and Lucretius, and Thucydides.

TO E. M. O.

CHANCE-CHILD of some lone sorrow on the hills,
Bach finds a babe: instant the great heart fills
With love of that fair innocence,
Conveys it thence,
Clothes it with all divinest harmonies,
Gives it sure foot to tread the dim degrees
Of Pilate's stair—Hush! hush! its last sweet breath
Wails far along the passages of death.



CAROL

THREE kings from out the Orient
For Judah's land were fairly bent,
To find the Lord of grace;
And as they journeyed pleasantlie,

A star kept shining in the sky,
To guide them to the place.
"O Star," they cried, "by all confest
Withouten dreed, the loveliest!"

The first was Melchior to see,
The emperour hight of Arabye,
An aged man, I trow:
He sat upon a rouncy bold,
Had taken of the red red gold,
The babe for to endow.
"O Star," he cried. . . .

The next was Gaspar, young and gay,
That held the realm of far Cathay—
Our Jesus drew him thence—
Yclad in silk from head to heel,
He rode upon a high cameel,
And bare the frankincense.
"O Star," he cried. . . .

The last was dusky Balthasar,
That rode upon a dromedar—
His coat was of the fur.
Dark-browed he came from Samarkand,
The Christ to seek, and in his hand
Upheld the bleeding myrrh.
"O Star," he cried, "by all confest
Withouten dreed, the loveliest."

M. T. W.

FAR swept from Lundy, spanned from side to side
With heaven's blue arch, the ocean waters flow ;
Sweet May has piled her pyramids of snow,
And the fair land is glorious as a bride,
That chooses summer for her hour of pride :
The lordly sun, with his great heart a-glow,
Is fain to kiss all things that bud and blow,
And Maurice sleeps, nor hears the murmuring tide.
Fine spirit, wheresoe'er, a quester keen,
You mark the asphodel with prints of pearl,
Breathing the freshness of the early lawns ;
O darling, clad in light of tend'rest sheen,
Hard by the nest of some celestial merle
We yet shall see you when the morning dawns.

THE ORGANIST IN HEAVEN

WHEN Wesley died, the Angelic orders,
To see him at the state,
Pressed so incontinent that the warders
Forgot to shut the gate.
So I, that hitherto had followed
As one with grief o'ercast,
Where for the doors a space was hollowed,
Crept in, and heard what passed.
And God said :—"Seeing thou hast given
Thy life to my great sounds,
Choose thou through all the cirque of Heaven
What most of bliss redounds."

Then Wesley said :—"I hear the thunder
Low growling from Thy seat—
Grant me that I may bind it under
The trampling of my feet."
And Wesley said :—"See, lightning quivers
Upon the presence walls—
Lord, give me of it four great rivers,
To be my manuals."
And then I saw the thunder chidden
As slave to his desire ;
And then I saw the space bestridden
With four great bands of fire ;
And stage by stage, stop stop subtending,
Each lever strong and true,
One shape inextricable blending,
The awful organ grew.
Then certain angels clad the Master
In very marvellous wise,
Till clouds of rose and alabaster
Concealed him from mine eyes.
And likest to a dove soft brooding,
The innocent figure ran ;
So breathed the breath of his preluding,
And then the fugue began—
Began ; but, to his office turning,
The porter swung his key ;
Wherefore, although my heart was yearning,
I had to go ; but he
Played on ; and, as I downward clomb,
I heard the mighty bars
Of thunder-gusts, that shook heaven's dome,
And moved the balanced stars.

TO E. M. O.

OAKELEY, whenas the bass you beat
In that tremendous way,
I still could fancy at your feet
A dreadful lion lay.
Askance he views the petulant scores,
But, when you touch a rib, he roars.

A SERMON AT CLEVEDON

GOOD FRIDAY

GO on! Go on!
Don't wait for me!
Isaac was Abraham's son—
Yes, certainly—
And as they clomb Moriah—
I know! I know!
A type of the Messiah—
Just so! just so!
Perfectly right; and then the ram
Caught in the—*listening?* Why of course I am!
Wherefore, my brethren, that was counted—yes—
To Abraham for righteousness—
Exactly, so I said—
At least—but go a-head!
Now mark
The conduct of the Patriarch—
"*Behold the wood!*"
Isaac exclaimed—By Jove, an Oxford hood!

"*But where*"—
What long straight hair!
"*Where is the lamb?*"
You mean—the ram:
No, no! I beg your pardon!
There's the Churchwarden,
In the Clerk's pew—
Stick tipped with blue—
Now Justification—
"By Faith?" I fancy; Aye, the old equation;
Go it, Justice! Go it, Mercy!
Go it, Douglas! Go it, Percy!
I back the winner,
And have a vague conception of the sinner—
Limbs nude,
Horatian attitude,
Nursing his foot in Sublapsarian mood—
More power
To you my friend! you're good for half-an-hour.
Dry bones! dry bones!
But in my ear the long-drawn west wind moans,
Sweet voices seem to murmur from the wave;
And I can sit, and look upon the stones
That cover Hallam's grave.

A FABLE

FOR HENRICUS D., ESQ., JUN.

IN the old old times
The harebells had their chimes,
I can tell you, and could sing out loud and brave;
But Queen Titania said
That they quite confused her head,

And she really must request—
And, in short, she gave no rest
To her silly Lord and Master,
Till his royal word he'd passed her
That the little darling harebells,
The merry little harebells,
Should be for ever silent as the grave.

Then to each little root
Sank down so sad and mute
Even the tiniest little tremor of a tinkle.
But when evening is come,
And the noisy day is dumb,
And the stars above the vale begin to twinkle,
Then, shy as is a fly,
Poor Oberon will come,
And lean him to the whispers
Of the lovely little lispers,
And he'll listen, and he'll listen, and he'll sigh.

THE PESSIMIST

OR

THE RAVEN AND THE JACKDAW

(*Manx pronunciation, Jăck-dāw*)

"CROAK—croak—croak!
Life's a pig-in-a-poke."
"Indeed!" says the little Jackdaw.

"Croak—croak—croak!
And a cruel joke!"
"Dear me!" says the little Jackdaw.

"Croak—croak—croak!
It's a tyrant's yoke!"
"How?" says the little Jackdaw.

"Croak—croak—croak!
We must vanish like smoke."
"Why?" says the little Jackdaw.

"Croak—croak—croak!
Ask the elm! ask the oak!"
"What?" says the little Jackdaw.

"Croak—croak—croak!
Your feelings you cloke!"
"Where?" says the little Jackdaw.

"Croak—croak—croak!
Do you like your own folk?"
"Yes!" says the little Jackdaw.

"Croak—croak—croak!
With despair don't you choke?"
"No!" says the little Jackdaw.

"Croak—croak—croak!
You're a d——d little bloke!"
"Always was" says the little Jackdaw.

ON THE SINKING OF THE *VICTORIA*

"Has Nelson heard?"

"Has Nelson heard?"
Death's angel spake what time the sea was rent
With that big plunge. Far hand-clap, and the word—
"Content."

Content; even so,
Great sailor, let the immortal signal fly—
Enough! we know our duty, and we know
To die.

To die. No loud
Thunder of battle shakes the furious scene;
And, if we die in silence, are you proud,
O Queen?

O Queen, 'tis thus
For you we die, no matter where or when
Or how we die, the while you say of us—
"O, nobly died! O glorious Englishmen!"

ΧΡΙΣΜΑ

To his Godson

Childe Dakyns, I'd have had thee born
To other heritage than ours,
To larger compass, nobler scorn,
Faith, courage, hope than dowers

The old and impotent world. So had thy powers
Been tuned to primal rhythms : in Noah's ark
Thou might'st have dreamed thy dove-bemurmured
dream ;
Or lain and heard old Nimrod's sleuth-hounds bark,
Echoing great Babel's towers ;
Or played with Laban's teraphim.

Or nearer, yet remote from us,
Thou might'st have grown a civic man
Protagonist to Aeschylus ;
Or blocked Pentelican
For Phidias ; or, foremost in the van,
Whose lithe-armed grapplings broke the Orient's pride,
Thou might'st have fought on Marathon's red
beach ;
Or, olive-screened by fair Ilissus' side,
Surprised the sleeping Pan ;
Or heard the martyr-sophist preach.

Perchance, to higher ends devote,
A fisher on Gennesareth,
Thou might'st have heard him from the boat,
And loved him unto death,
Who, with the outgoing of his latest breath,
Desired the souls of men : thy thought to lay
His pillow in the stern, when blast on blast
Came sweeping from the ridge of Magdala ;
Thy charge to ward all scathe
From that supreme enthusiast.

Or, still in time for purpose true,
Though haply fallen on later years,
Thou might'st have stemmed the Cyprian blue
With Richard and his peers,
Cross-dight as chosen God's own cavaliers ;

Or borne a banner into Crecy fight;
  Or with Earl Simon on the Lewes fields
Stood strong-embattled for the Commons' right,
  Or scattered at Poitiers
The wall of Gallic shields.

Or, borne with Raleigh to the West,
  Thou might'st have felt the glad emprise
Of men who follow a behest
  Self-sealed, and spurn the skies
Familiar; leaving to the would-be wise
These seats; as wondering not in any zone
  If some sweet island bloom beneath their prow:
"Let the daft Stuart maunder on his throne!
  Let slack-knee'd varlets bow!
We will away!—the world has room enow!"

Childe Dakyns, it may not be so!
  The long-breathed pulse, the aim direct
The forces that concurrent flow,
  Charged with their sure effect—
Sure joy, childe Dakyns, must thou not expect;
But fever-throb; but agues of desire,
  Like zig-zag lightnings scrabbled on a cloud;
Irresolute execution; paling fire
  Of Hope; life's springs by cold Suspicion bowed—
All these thou needs must know;
  And I will meet thee somewhere in the crowd.

Ah then, childe Dakyns, what of generous ire,
Of Honour, Truth, of Chastity's bright snow,
  The pitying centuries have allowed
To us forlorn, thou child elect,
  Grant me to see it on thy forehead glow!

II. LYRICAL

(ENGLISH)

"STAR OF HOPE"

STAR of hope, star of love,
Did you see it from heaven above?
Love was sleeping, hope was fled—
Did you see what Nelly did?
I know it was only the back of my head—
But did you, did you, did you, did you,
Did you see what Nelly did?
You're my witness, star of joy!
Was it a girl that kissed a boy?
Was it a boy that kissed a girl?
Oh, happy worl'!
I don't know!
Let it go!
I thought I'd have died, and nobody missed me,
But Nelly has kissed me! Nelly has kissed me!

Come down! come down!
Put on your brightest crown!
Slip in with me among the clover.
Now tell me all about it—I'm her lover!
Did you see it? Are you sure?
Is she lovely? Is she pure?
Smell these buds! Is that her breath?
Will I love her unto death?

Ah, little star! I see you smiling there
Upon heaven's lowest stair!
I know, I know
It's time to go:
But I'm only waitin' till you have blessed me,
For Nelly has kissed me! Nelly has kissed me.

"APPLE-TREE"

"APPLE-TREE, apple-tree,
Cover me, cover me,
Branches of the apple-tree!
While night's shadows drift and flee,
Fall on me, fall on me,
Blossoms of the apple-tree—
Pink-tipt snowflakes tenderly
Gliding from the apple-tree!"

SPES ALTERA

TO THE FUTURE MANX POET

O POET, somewhere to be born
'Twixt Calf and Ayre before the century closes,
Cain, Karran, Kewish, or Skillicorn,
Soft-lapt serene 'mid antenatal roses,
Abide until I come, lest chance we miss
Each other as we pass, nor any kiss
Be planted on your brow thrice dear,
Nor any spell of mine be murmured in your ear!

For I will seek you in the bowers
Where Plato marked the virgin souls desiring
The birth-call of the ripening hours,
And Spenser saw old Genius attiring
The naked babes. And I will help to dress
The awful beauty of your nakedness;
And from that moment you shall be
The Poet of the Isle, a Poet glad and free.

Yet haply should the search be vain,
For that I am not worthy—*you* are coming:
Heaven holds you promised! Karran, Cain,
Kewish, Skillicorn, revealed the absolute summing
Of cherished hopes. So may the Gods enlarge
Your wings to flight immortal as the charge
You keep to sing the perfect song
Pent in your Mother's inmost heart, and pent so long!

Nor lacking you of scholarship
To guide the subtle harmonies soft-flowing
From rugged outward-seeming lip,
By vulgar minds not relished, all unknowing
Of gentle arts. Trench deep within the soil
That bore you fateful: toil, and toil, and toil!
'Tis deep as Death; dig, till the rock
Clangs hard against the spade, and yields the central shock.

No mincing this. Be nervous, soaked
In dialect colloquial, retaining
The native accent pure, unchoked
With cockney balderdash. Old Manx is waning,
She's dying in the *tholthan*.[1] Lift the latch,
Enter, and kneel beside the bed, and catch

[1] Ruined cottage.

The sweet long sighs, to which the clew
Trembles, and asks their one interpreter in you.

Then shut the *tholthan.* Strike the lyre,
  Toward that proud shore your face reluctant turning;
With Keltic force, with Keltic fire,
  With Keltic tears, let every string be burning.
And use the instrument that we have wrought,
Hammered on Saxon stithies, to our thought
Alien, unapt, but capable of modes
Wherein the soul its treasured wealth unloads.

And, for the wayward thing is lax,
  Capricious, guard against the insidious changing
Of pitch, that makes more tense, or slacks
  Our diatonics. See there be no ranging
Ad libitum; but moor the wand'rer fast,
And fix him where two sev'ring ages cast
Their secular anchors. Matters not,
If arbitrary, when or where one single jot.

But come, come soon, or else we slide
  To lawlessness, or deep-sea English soundings,
Absorbent, final, in the tide
  Of Empire lost, from homely old surroundings,
Familiar, swept. O excellent babe, arise,
And, ere a decade fail from forth the skies,
Unto our longing hearts be born,
Cain, Karran, Kewish supreme, supremest Skillicorn!

1896.

"TO SING A SONG SHALL PLEASE MY COUNTRYMEN"

To sing a song shall please my countrymen;
To unlock the treasures of the Island heart;
With loving feet to trace each hill and glen,
And find the ore that is not for the mart
Of commerce: this is all I ask.
No task,
But joy, GOD wot!
Wherewith "the stranger" intermeddles not—

Who, if perchance,
He lend his ear,
As caught by mere romance
Of nature, traversing
On viewless wing
All parallels of sect
And race and dialect,
Then shall he be to me most dear.

Natheless, for mine own people do I sing,
And use the old familiar speech:
Happy if I shall reach
Their inmost consciousness.
One thing
They will confess:
I never did them wrong,
And so accept the singer and the song.

1881.

"DEAR COUNTRYMEN, WHATE'ER IS LEFT TO US"

Dear countrymen, whate'er is left to us
Of ancient heritage—
Of manners, speech, of humours, polity
The limited horizon of our stage—
Old love, hope, fear,
All this I fain would fix upon the page;
That so the coming age,
Lost in the empire's mass,
Yet haply longing for their fathers, here
May see, as in a glass,
What they held dear—
May say, "'Twas thus and thus
They lived"; and, as the time-flood onward rolls,
Secure an anchor for their Keltic souls.

1887.

CLEVEDON VERSES

I

Hallam's Church, Clevedon

A grassy field, the lambs, the nibbling sheep,
A blackbird and a thorn, the April smile
Of brooding peace, the gentle airs that wile
The Channel of its moodiness, a steep
That brinks the flood, a little gate to keep

The sacred ground—and then that old gray pile,
A simple church wherein there is no guile
Of ornament ; and here the Hallams sleep.
Blest mourner, in whose soul the grief grew song,
Not now, methinks, awakes the slumbering pain,
While Joy, with busy fingers, weaves the woof
Of Spring. But when the Winter nights are long,
Thy spirit comes with sobbing of the rain,
And spreads itself, and moans upon the roof.

II

Dora

She knelt upon her brother's grave,
My little girl of six years old—
He used to be so good and brave,
The sweetest lamb of all our fold ;
He used to shout, he used to sing,
Of all our tribe the little king—
And so unto the turf her ear she laid,
To hark if still in that dark place he played.
No sound ! no sound !
Death's silence was profound ;
And horror crept
Into her aching heart, and Dora wept.
If this is as it ought to be,
My God, I leave it unto Thee.

III

Secuturus

Each night when I behold my bed
So fair outspread,

And all so soft and sweet—
O, then above the folded sheet
His little coffin grows upon mine eye,
And I would gladly die.

IV

Cui Bono?

What comes
Of all my grief? The Arabian grove
Is cut that costly gums
May float into the nostrils of great Jove.
My heart resembles more a desert land:
Who cuts it cuts but rock, or digs the sapless sand.

V

Star-steering

O, will it ever come again
That I upon the boundless main
Shall steer me by the light of stars?
Now, locked with sandy bars,
Life's narrowing channel bids me mark
Each serviceable spark
That Holm or Lundy flings upon the dark.
Thus man is more to me—
But O, the gladness of the outer sea!
O Venus! Mars!
When shall I steer by you again, O stars?

VI

Per omnia Deus

What moves at Cardiff, how a man
At Newport ends the day as he began,
At Weston what adventure may befall,
What Bristol dreams, or if she dream at all,
Upon the pier, with step sedate,
I meditate—
Poor souls! whose God is Mammon—
Meanwhile, from Ocean's gate,
Keen for the foaming spate,
The true God rushes in the salmon.

VII

Norton Wood (Dora's birthday)

In Norton wood the sun was bright,
In Norton wood the air was light,
And meek anemonies,
Kissed by the April breeze,
Were trembling left and right.
Ah, vigorous year!
Ah, primrose dear
With smile so arch!
Ah, budding larch!
Ah, hyacinth so blue,
We also must make free with you!
Where are those cowslips hiding?
But we should not be chiding—
The ground is covered every inch—
What sayest, master finch?

I see you on the swaying bough!
And very neat you are, I vow!
And Dora says it is "the happiest day!"
Her birthday, hers!
And there's a jay,
And from that clump of firs
Shoots a great pigeon, purple, blue, and gray.
And, coming home,
Well-laden, as we clomb
Sweet Walton hill,
A cuckoo shouted with a will—
"Cuckoo! cuckoo!" the first we've heard!
"Cuckoo! cuckoo!" God bless the bird!
Scarce time to take his breath,
And now "Cuckoo!" he saith—
Cuckoo! cuckoo! three cheers!
And let the welkin ring!
He has not folded wing
Since last he saw Algiers.

VIII

The Bristol Channel

I

The sulky old gray brute!
But when the sunset strokes him,
Or twilight shadows coax him,
He gets so silver-milky,
He turns so soft and silky,
He'd make a water-spaniel for King Knut.

II

This sea was Lazarus, all day
At Dives' gate he lay,

And lapped the crumbs.
Night comes;
The beggar dies—
Forthwith the Channel, coast to coast,
Is Abraham's bosom; and the beggar lies
A lovely ghost.

IX

The Voices of Nature

This cluck of water in the tangles—
What said it to the Angles?
What to the Jutes,
This wave sip-sopping round the salt sea-roots?
With what association did it hit on
The tympanum of a Damnonian Briton?
To tender Guinevere, to Britomart,
The stout of heart,
Along the guarded beach
Spoke it the same sad speech
It speaks to me—
This sopping of the sea?

Surely the plash
Of water upon stones,
Encountering in their ears the tones
Of dominant passions masterful,
Made but a bourdon for the chord
Of a great key, that rested lord
Of all the music, straining not the bones
Of Merlin's scull;
And in the ear of Vivian its frets
Were silver castanets,

That tinkled 'mong the vanities, and quickened
The free, full-blooded pulse,
Nor sickened
Her soul, nor stabbed her to the heart.
Strange! that to me this gurgling of the dulse
Allays no smart,
Consoles no nerve,
Rounds off no curve—
Alack!
Comes rather like a sigh,
A question that has no reply—
Opens a deep misgiving
What is this life I'm living—
Our fathers were not so—
Silence, thou moaning wrack!
And yet . . . I do not know.
And yet . . . I would go back.

LYNTON VERSES

I

MAY MARGERY of Lynton
Is brighter than the day;
Her eye is like the sun in heaven—
Was ne'er so sweet a May!

May Margery has learnt a tune
To which her soul is set—
The voices of all happy things
Are in its cadence met—
The voices of all happy things
In air, and earth, and sea,
Make music in the little breast
Of sweet May Margery.

And has May Margery a heart?
Nay, child, God give thee grace!
He made it for thee years ago,
And keeps it in a place—
The heart of gold that shall be thine—
But who shall have the key
That opens it—Ah, who? ah, who?
Ah, who, May Margery?

II

At Malmsmead, by the river side
I met a little lady,
And, as she passed, she sang a song
That was not Tate or Brady,
Or any song by art contrived
Of minstrel or of poet,
For baron's hall, or chanter's desk;
And yet I seemed to know it.
Good sooth! I think the song was mine—
The all unthinking sadness—
She read it from my longing eyes,
And gave it back in gladness.
And yet it was a challenge too,
As plain as she could make it,
So petulant, so innocent,
And yet I could not take it.
A breath, a gleam, and she is gone—
Just half a minute only—
So die the breaths, so fade the gleams,
And we are left so lonely.

III

Milk! milk! milk!
Straight as the Parson's bands,

Streaming like silk
Under and over her hands—
What is Mary scheming?
What is Mary dreaming?

Swish! swish! swish!
Pressing her sweet young brow,
Smooth as a dish,
To the side of the sober cow—
Can she tell no tale then?
Nought but milk and pail then?

Strip! strip! strip!
Far away over the sea
Comes there a ship,
The ship of all ships that be?
Ah, little fairy!
Ah, Mary, Mary!

IV

Lynton to Porlock (Exmoor)

From Lynton when you drive to Porlock,
Just take old Tempus by the forelock—
In any case, don't hurry; time and tide—
Of course - I know. But, where the roads divide,
Upon the moor,
Be sure
To shun the *via dextra*,
And choose the marvellous ride
(One half-hour extra)
That zigzags to a gate
Nigh Porlock town—O, it is great,

That strip of Channel sea,
Backed with the prime of English Arcady!
It is not that the heather rushes
In mad tumultuous flushes
(*Trickling*'s the word I'd use);
But O, the greens and blues
And browns whereon the crimson dwells;
The buds, the bells;
The drop from arch to arch
Of pine and larch;
The scented glooms where soft sun-fainting culvers
Elude the eye,
And fox-gloves, like innumerous-celled revolvers
Shoot honey-tongued quintessence of July!

V

Sweet breeze that sett'st the summer buds a swaying,
Dear lambs amid the primrose meadows playing,
Let me not think!
O floods, upon whose brink
The merry birds are maying,
Dream, softly dream! O blessed mother, lead me
Unsevered from thy girdle—lead me! feed me!
I have no will but thine;
I need not but the juice
Of elemental wine—
Perish remoter use
Of strength reserved for conflict yet to come!
Let me be dumb,
As long as I may feel thy hand—
This, this is all—do ye not understand
How the great Mother mixes all our bloods?
O breeze! O swaying buds!
O lambs, O primroses, O floods!

VI

(Symphony)

Adagio.

We saw her die, and she is dead—
Our little sister—
A March wind came and kissed her,
And sighed and fled—
Beyond the hill,
Far in the East we hear him sighing still.
But she is dead,
Our little sister's dead!
Ah, chill! chill! chill!
Ah, see the drooping head!
Our sister's dead—
We know that she is dead.

Andante con moto.

Talitha cumi! O Thou Christ,
Hast kept the tryst?
Laugh not, O maidens! this is He
Of Galilee,
Of Nazareth,
The Christ that conquers Death—
Dost catch a breath,
O Christ? O, Life!
Talitha cumi! See
The tumult as of some sweet strife
Strained tremulous up; up—
"Give her to drink!" He saith—
Yea, Lord, behold, a cup!

Scherzo.

O gentle airs of Spring,
Come to the hills and the valleys,

From the South, from the West,
As seems you best,
Rocked in your golden galleys!
Bring the bread, bring the wine,
Bring the smell that's fine,
Bring the scarf and the bright green wimple!
See, she dips! see, she sips! put your oozy lips
To the curve of each nascent dimple—
To her head, to her feet
So warm and sweet
Bring the rain and the sunshine after;
To the ordered limbs
Where the new life swims,
To the kneaded mesh
Of the soft pink flesh,
Bring baths of dew,
Bring skies of blue—
Bring love, and light, and laughter!

Trio.

Goldfinch underneath the bough
Clinging, swinging,
You are happy now.

Blackbird, as you flit along,
Staying, swaying,
Sing her but one song!

Dove, when twilight wakes unrest,
Yearning, burning,
Lean to her your breast!

Finale.

O God of Heaven!
These are Thy gifts, to all Thy creatures given—

Love, laughter, light—
Stablish the ancient right,
O God; and bend above them all Thy brooding arch—
Dove, blackbird, goldfinch, larch!

THE EMPTY CUP

Fly away, bark,
Over the sea!
Take thou my grief,
Take it with thee!
Bear it afar
Unto the shore
Where the old griefs are
For evermore!
O, it was hard!
Take it away—
Pressed on my heart
By night and by day.
I will not have it;
Let it go, let it go!
Shall I have nothing
But wailing and woe?

Let it be, let it be!
O, bring it again!
Bring my sorrow to me,
Bring weeping and pain!
Bring my sorrow to me—
After all, it is mine:
O God of my heart,
I will not repine.

For I feel such a lack,
And I am such a stone—
Bring it back, bring it back!
It is better to groan
With my old, old load
Than to search within,
And find nothing there
But folly and sin.
O, I cannot bear
This empty cup:
If it must be with gall,
Fill it up! fill it up!
Fill my soul, fill my soul!
And I will bless
The hand that filleth
Mine emptiness.

PAIN

THE man that hath great griefs I pity not;
'Tis something to be great
In any wise, and hint the larger state,
Though but in shadow of a shade, God wot!

Moreover, while we wait the possible,
This man has touched the fact,
And probed till he has felt the core, where, packed
In pulpy folds, resides the ironic ill.

And while we others sip the obvious sweet—
Lip-licking after-taste
Of glutinous rind, lo! this man hath made haste,
And pressed the sting that holds the central seat.

For thus it is God stings us into life,
  Provoking actual souls
  From bodily systems, giving us the poles
That are His own, not merely balanced strife.

Nay, the great passions are His veriest thought,
  Which whoso can absorb,
  Nor, querulous halting, violate their orb,
In him the mind of God is fullest wrought.

Thrice happy such an one! Far other he
  Who dallies on the edge
  Of the great vortex, clinging to a sedge
Of patent good, a timorous Manichee;

Who takes the impact of a long-breathed force,
  And fritters it away
  In eddies of disgust, that else might stay
His nerveless heart, and fix it to the course.

For there is threefold oneness with the One;
  And he is one, who keeps
  The homely laws of life; who, if he sleeps,
Or wakes, in his true flesh God's will is done.

And he is one, who takes the deathless forms,
  Who schools himself to think
  With the All-thinking, holding fast the link,
God-riveted, that bridges casual storms.

But tenfold one is he, who feels all pains
  Not partial, knowing them
  As ripples parted from the gold-beaked stem,
Wherewith God's galley onward ever strains.

To him the sorrows are the tension-thrills
Of that serene endeavour,
Which yields to God for ever and for ever
The joy that is more ancient than the hills.

THE PITCHER

OFTEN at a wayside fountain
You may see a pitcher stand,
Stooped beneath the mossy channel,
Purple slate on either hand.

And the streamlet, never heeding
If the pitcher's brimming o'er,
With an innocent persistence
Lavishes its silver store.

And the crystal-beaded bubbles
Burst upon its lazy lip;
But the well-contented pitcher
Does not even care to sip;

Does not even know that o'er him
There is flowing from the hill
What would fill a thousand pitchers,
And a thousand pitchers still.

Wasted on his gurgling fulness
All its fretting soft and faint,
Wasted all its pretty urging,
All the music of its plaint!

But the streamlet, ever patient,
Ceaseless laves his churlish sides;

For the streamlet has the patience
That in Nature's heart abides.

Even so at God's sweet fountain
Some one left me long ago;
Left my shallow soul expectant
Of the everlasting flow

And it came, and poured upon me,
Rose and mantled to the brim;
And I knew that God was filling
One more soul to carry Him.

So He filled me—then I lost Him,
Lost Him in His own excess;
For He could not but transcend me
In my very nothingness.

Wretched soul, that could'st not hold Him!
Soul incapable and base!
Hardly 'ware that He doth bathe thee
Steeped in largess of His grace!

Puny soul, that could'st not take Him!
Torpid soul—that feel'st no need!
Perish from before the Godhead,
Let a larger soul succeed!

"Not so!" saith the God of goodness;
"I have many souls to fill;
From this soul a while desisting,
I will tarry in the hill.

"Then, when it is dry and dusty,
I will seek the thirsty plain;
I will wet the mossy channel,
And the purple slate again."

SONG

"WEARY wind of the West
Over the billowy sea—
Come to my heart, and rest!
Ah, rest with me!
Come from the distance dim
Bearing the sun's last sigh;
I hear thee sobbing for him
Through all the sky."

So the wind came,
Purpling the middle sea,
Crisping the ripples of flame—
Came unto me;
Came with a rush to the shore,
Came with a bound to the hill,
Fell, and died at my feet—
Then all was still.

VERIS ET FAVONI

SING, Zephyr, sing,
Shed from your dusky wing
The violets.
Make music with your golden frets—
Sing, Zephyr, sing!

Sigh, Zephyr, sigh!
Give passion to the sky!

The tawny south
Has no such odorous mouth—
Sigh, Zephyr, sigh!

Sue, Zephyr, sue!
Bring earth the sunny blue,
The pearly mist
With new-born love-fire kissed—
Sue, Zephyr, sue!

Sip, Zephyr, sip!
The primrose lends her lip,
The crocus thrills,
Love hides among the daffodils—
Sip, Zephyr, sip!

Seek, Zephyr, seek!
The vermeil of my lady's cheek!
So seeking, sipping, suing, sighing, singing,
While old Time his flight is winging,
Tell her to be
Most kind to me.

IN GREMIO

"COME unto God!" I heard a preacher call:
Immediate God to me,
Who in His bosom lay—"Mind not at all
Such accidents as he—
Mechanical alarum, sightless seer,
Who bids thee come, and knows not thou art here."

EXILE

In sorrow and in nakedness of soul
I look into the street,
If haply there mine eye may meet,
As up and down it ranges,
The servants of my Father bearing changes
Of raiment sweet—
Seven changes sweet with violet and moly,
Seven changes pure and holy.

But nowhere 'mid the thick entangled throng
Mark I their proud sad paces;
Nowhere the light upon their faces,
Serene with that great beauty
Wherein the singly meditated duty
Its empire traces:—
Only the fretful merchants stand and cry:—
"Come buy! come buy! come buy!"

And the big bales are drunk with all the purple
That wells in vats of Tyre,
And unrolled damasks stream with golden fire
And broideries of Ind,
And, piled on Polar furs, are braveries winned
From far Gadire.
And I am waiting, abject, cold, and numb,
Yet sure that they will come.

O naked soul, be patient in this stead!
Thrice blest are they that wait.
O Father of my soul, the gate
Will open soon, and they

Who minister to Thee and Thine alway
Will enter straight,
And speak to me, that I shall understand
The speech of Thy great land.

And I will rise, and wash, and they will dress me
As Thou wouldst have me dressed;
And I shall stand confest
Thy son; and men shall falter:—
"Behold the ephod of the unseen altar!
O God-possessed!
Thy raiment is not from the looms of earth,
But has a Heavenly birth."

CLIMBING

When I would get me to the upper fields,
I look if anywhere
A man be found who craves what joyaunce yields
The keen thin air,
Who loves the rapture of the height,
And fain would snatch with me a perilous delight.

I wait, and linger on the village street,
And long for one to come,
And say:—"The morning's bright, it is not meet
That thou the hum
Of vulgar life shouldst leave, and seek the view
Alone from those great peaks; I surely will go too."

But not to me comes ever any man;
Or, if he come, dull sleep
Still thickens in his eyes, so that to scan
The beckoning steep

He has no power ; and of its scornful cone
Unconscious sits him down, and I go on alone.

Yet children are before me on the slope,
Their dew-bedabbled prints
Press the black fern-roots naked ; sunny hope
Darts red, and glints
Upon their hair ; but, devious, they remain
Among the bilberry beds, and I go on again.

And so there is no help for it, no mate
To share the arduous way :
Natheless I must ascend ere it grow late,
And, dim and gray,
The final cloud obstruct my soul's endeavour,
And I see nothing more for ever and for ever.

RISUS DEI

Methinks in Him there dwells alway
A sea of laughter very deep,
Where the leviathans leap,
And little children play,
Their white feet twinkling on its crisped edge ;
But in the outer bay
The strong man drives the wedge
Of polished limbs,
And swims.
Yet there is one will say :—
" It is but shallow, neither is it broad "—
And so he frowns ; but is he nearer God ?

One saith that God is in the note of bird,
And piping wind, and brook,
And all the joyful things that speak no word :
Then if from sunny nook
Or shade a fair child's laugh
Is heard,
Is not God half?
And if a strong man gird
His loins for laughter, stirred
By trick of ape or calf—
Is he no better than a cawing rook?

Nay 'tis a Godlike function ; laugh thy fill !
Mirth comes to thee unsought ;
Mirth sweeps before it like a flood the mill
Of languaged logic ; thought
Hath not its source so high ;
The will
Must let it by :
For though the heavens are still,
God sits upon His hill,
And sees the shadows fly ;
And if He laughs at fools, why should He not?

"Yet hath a fool a laugh"—Yea, of a sort ;
God careth for the fools ;
The chemic tools
Of laughter He hath given them, and some toys
Of sense, as 'twere a small retort
Wherein they may collect the joys
Of natural giggling, as becomes their state :
The fool is not inhuman, making sport
For such as would not gladly be without
That old familiar noise :
Since, though he laugh not, he can cachinnate—
This also is of God, we may not doubt.

"Is there an empty laugh?" Best called a shell
From which a laugh has flown,
A mask, a well
That hath no water of its own,
Part echo of a groan,
Which, if it hide a cheat,
Is a base counterfeit;
But if one borrow
A cloak to wrap a sorrow
That it may pass unknown,
Then can it not be empty. God doth dwell
Behind the feigned gladness,
Inhabiting a sacred core of sadness.

"Yet is there not an evil laugh?" Content—
What follows?
When Satan fills the hollows
Of his bolt-riven heart
With spasms of unrest,
And calls it laughter; if it give relief
To his great grief,
Grudge not the dreadful jest.
But if the laugh be aimed
At any good thing that it be ashamed,
And blush thereafter,
Then it is evil, and it is not laughter.

There are who laugh, but know not why:
Whether the force
Of simple health and vigour seek a course
Extravagant, as when a wave runs high,
And tips with crest of foam the incontinent curve,
Or if it be reserve
Of power collected for a goal, which had,
Behold! the man is fresh. So when strung nerve,

Stout heart, pent breath, have brought you to the source
Of a great river, on the topmost stie
Of cliff, then have you bad
All heaven to laugh with you ; yet somewhere nigh
A shepherd lad
Has wondering looked, and deemed that you were mad.

DARTMOOR

Sunset at Chagford

HOMO LOQVITVR

Is it ironical, a fool enigma,
This sunset show ?
The purple stigma,
Black mountain cut upon a saffron glow—
Is it a mammoth joke,
A riddle put for me to guess,
Which having duly honoured, I may smoke,
And go to bed,
And snore,
Having a soothing consciousness
Of something red ?
Or is it more ?
Ah, is it, is it more ?

A dole, perhaps ?
The scraps
Tossed from the table of the revelling gods ?—
What odds !
I taste them—Lazarus
Was nourished thus !

But, all the same, it surely is a cheat—
Is this the stuff they eat?
A cheat! a cheat!
Then let the garbage be—
Some pig-wash! let it vanish down the sink
Of night! 'tis not for me.
I will not drink
Their draff,
While, throned on high, they quaff
The fragrant sconce—
Has Heaven no cloaca for the nonce?

Say 'tis an anodyne—
It never shall be mine.
I want no opiates—
The best of all their cates
Were gross to balk the meanest sense;
I want to be co-equal with their fates;
I will not be put off with temporal pretence:
I want to be awake, and know, not stand
And stare at waving of a conjuror's hand.

But is it speech
Wherewith they strive to reach
Our poor inadequate souls?
The round earth rolls;
I cannot hear it hum—
The stars are dumb—
The voices of the world are in my ear
A sensuous murmur. Nothing speaks
But man, my fellow—him I hear,
And understand; but beasts and birds
And winds and waves are destitute of words.
What is the alphabet
The gods have set?

What babbling! what delusion!
And in these sunset tints
What gay confusion!
Man prints
His meaning, has a letter
Determinate. I know that it is better
Than all this cumbrous hieroglyph—
The *For*, the *If*
Are growth of man's analysis:
The gods in bliss
Scrabble a baby-jargon on the skies
For us to analyse!
Cumbrous? nay, idiotic—
A party-coloured symbolism,
The fragments of a shivered prism:
Man gives the swift demotic.

'Tis good to see
The economy
Of poor upstriving man!
Since time began,
He has been sifting
The elements; while God, on chaos drifting,
Sows broadcast all His stuff.
Lavish enough,
No doubt; but why this waste?
See! of these very sunset dyes
The virgin chaste
Takes one, and in a harlot's eyes
Another rots. They go by billion billions:
Each blade of grass
Ignores them as they pass;
The spiders in their foul pavilions,
Behold this vulgar gear,
And sneer;

Dull frogs
In bogs
Catch rosy gleams through rushes,
And know that night is near;
Wrong-headed thrushes
Blow bugles to it;
And a wrong-headed poet
Will strut, and strain the cogs
Of the machine, he blushes
To call his Muse, and maunder;
And, marvellous to relate!
These pseudo-messengers of state
Will wander
Where there is no intelligence to meet them,
Nor even a sensorium to greet them.
The very finest of them
Go where there's nought to love them
Or notice them: to cairns, to rocks
Where ravens nurse their young,
To mica-splints from granite-boulders wrung
By channels of the marsh, to stocks
Of old dead willows in a pool as dead.
Can anything be said
To these? The leech
Looks from its muddy lair,
And sees a silly something in the air—
Call you this *speech?*
O God, if it be speech,
Speak plainer,
If Thou would'st teach
That I shall be a gainer!
The age of picture-alphabets is gone:
We are not now so weak;
We are too old to con
The horn-book of our youth. Time lags—

O, rip this obsolete blazon into rags!
And speak! O, speak!

But, if I be a spectacle
In Thy great theatre, then do Thy will:
Arrange Thy instruments with circumspection;
Summon Thine angels to the vivisection!
But quick! O, quick!
For I am sick,
And very sad.
Thy pupils will be glad.
"See," Thou exclaim'st, "this ray!
How permanent upon the retina!
How odd that purple hue!
The pineal gland is blue.
I stick this probe
In the posterior lobe—
Behold the cerebellum
A smoky yellow, like old vellum!
Students will please observe
The structure of the optic nerve.
See! nothing could be finer—
That film of pink
Around the hippocampus minor.
Behold!
I touch it, and it turns bright gold.
Again!—as black as ink.
Another lancet—thanks!
That's Manx—
Yes, the delicate pale sea-green
Passing into ultra-marine—
A little blurred—in fact
This brain seems packed
With sunsets. Bring
That battery here; now put your

Negative pole beneath the suture—
That's just the thing.
Now then the other way—
I say! I say!
More chloroform!
(A little more will do no harm)
Now this is the most instructive of all
The phenomena, what in fact we may call
The most obvious justification
Of vivisection in general.
Observe (once! twice!
That's very nice)—
Observe, I say, the incipient relation
Of a quasi-moral activity
To this physical agitation!
Of course, you see. . . ."
Yes, yes, O God,
I feel the prod
Of that dissecting knife.
Instructive, say the pupil angels, *very:*
And some take notes, and some take sandwiches
and sherry;
And some are prying
Into the very substance of my brain—
I feel their fingers!
(My life! my life!)
Yes, yes! it lingers!
The sun, the sun—
Go on! go on!
Blue, yellow, red!
But please remember that I am not dead,
Nor even dying.

RESPONDET ΔΗΜΙΟΥΡΓΟΣ

YES, it is hard, but not for you alone.
You speak of cup and throne,
And all that separates Me from you.
It is not that you don't believe:
It is but that you misconceive
The work I have to do.

No throne, no cup,
Nor down, but likest up,
As from a deep black shaft, I look to see
The fabric of My own immensity.
You have the temporal activity, and rejoice
In sweet articulate voice—
Tunes, songs.
To Me no less
Belongs
The fixed, sad fashion of productiveness.
You think that I am wise,
Or cunning, clever as a man is clever.
You think all knowledge with Me lies,
From Me must flow.
I know not if I know—
But this I know, I will work on for ever.
You fret because you are not this and that,
And so you die;
But I,
Who have not sat
Since first into the void I swam,
Obeying Mine own laws,
Persist, because
I am but what I am.

I am old and blind ;
I have no speech
"Wherewith to reach"
Your quick-selecting ears.
And yet I mark your tears ;
And yet I would be kind.
And so I strain
To speak, as now ;
And, in more cheerful vein,
You haply will allow
I make My meaning fairly plain.
Therefore it is I store
Such beauty in the clouds, and on the shore
Make foam-flakes glisten ; therefore you have seen
This sunset ; therefore 'tis the green
And lusty grass
Hath come to pass,
And flame
Lies sparkling in the dews—
And yet I cannot choose
But do the same !
I am no surgeon,
I have no lancet, but I mingle
Sap for the buds, that they may burgeon,
And tingle
With soft sweet throes
Of parturition vegetal.
And so to all
The surfaces
I outward press,
And hold the very brink
Of speech, that I would think
Speech must come next.
But I can do no more : wherefore I am not vexed ;
But you are, being perplexed

With suppositions, scribbling o'er the text
Of natural life. And, seeing that this is so,
And that I cannot know
The innumerous ills,
Therefore I strew the hills
And vallies with delight,
That, day or night,
In sad or merry plight,
You may catch sight
Of some sweet joy that thrills
Your heart.
And what if I impart
The same to frog or newt,
What if I steep the root
Of some old stump in bright vermilion,
And if the spider in his quaint pavilion
Catches a sunbeam where he thought a fly,
Ah, why
Should I not care for such?
I, Who make all things, know it is not much.
And, by analogy I must suppose
They have their woes
Like you:
Therefore I still must strew
Joys that may wait for centuries,
And light at last on Socrates,
Or on the frog, whose eyes
You may have noticed full of bright surprise—
Or have you not? Ah, then
You only think of men!
But I would have no single creature miss
One possible bliss.
And this
Is certain: never be afraid!
I love what I have made.

I know this is not wit,
This is not to be clever,
Or anything whatever.
You see, I am a servant, that is it:
You've hit
The mark—a servant; for the other word—
Why, you are Lord, if any one is Lord.

THE PRAYERS

I WAS in Heaven one day when all the prayers
Came in, and angels bore them up the stairs
Unto a place where he
Who was ordained such ministry
Should sort them so that in that palace bright
The presence-chamber might be duly dight;
For they were like to flowers of various bloom;
And a divinest fragrance filled the room.

Then did I see how the great sorter chose
One flower that seemed to me a hedgeling rose,
And from the tangled press
Of that irregular loveliness
Set it apart—and—"This," I heard him say,
"Is for the Master": so upon his way
He would have passed; then I to him:—
"Whence is this rose? O thou of cherubim
The chiefest?"—"Know'st thou not?" he said and smiled,
"This is the first prayer of a little child."

ΠΟΙΗΜΑΤΙΟΝ

For J. P.

It was in pleasant Derbyshire,
Upon a bright spring day,
From a valley to a valley
I sought to find a way;
And I met a little lad,
A lad both blithe and bold;
And his eyes were of the blue,
And his hair was of the gold.
"Ho! little lad, of yonder point
The name come quickly tell!"
Then, prompt as any echo,
Came the answer:—"Tap o' th' hill."
"But has it any other name
That a man may say—as thus—
Kinderscout, or *Fairbrook Naze?*"
Then said the child, with constant gaze:—
"*Tap o' th' hill* it gets with us."

"Yes, yes!" I said, "but has it not
Some other name as well?
Its own, you know?" "Aye, aye!" he said,
"Tap o' th' hill! tap o' th' hill!"
"But your father, now? how calls it he?"
Then clear as is a bell
Rang out the merry laugh:—"Of course,
He calls it *Tap o' th' hill!*"
So I saw it was no use;
But I said within myself:—
"He has a wholesome doctrine,
This cheerful little elf."

And O, the weary knowledge!
And O, the hearts that swell!
And O, the blessed limit—
"Tap o' th' hill! tap o' th' hill!"

JUVENTA PERENNIS

If youth be thine,
Spare not to drink its wine;
If youth be fled,
Hold up
The golden cup—
God's grapes are always red.

VESPERS

O BLACKBIRD, what a boy you are!
How you do go it!
Blowing your bugle to that one sweet star—
How you do blow it!
And does she hear you, blackbird boy, so far?
Or is it wasted breath?
"Good Lord! she is so bright
To-night!"
The blackbird saith.

I BENDED UNTO ME

I BENDED unto me a bough of May,
That I might see and smell:
It bore it in a sort of way,
It bore it very well.

But, when I let it backward sway,
Then it were hard to tell
With what a toss, with what a swing,
The dainty thing
Resumed its proper level,
And sent me to the devil.
I know it did—you doubt it?
I turned, and saw them whispering about it.

IS IT *AMAVI* OR IS IT *AMO?*

SIT on the rocks and watch the tide
And which is ebb and which is flow,
And over to the other side :—
Is it *amavi* or is it *amo?*
Kneel at the altar of the years,
Take heart, and haply you shall know—
Look down into the fount of tears :
Is it *amavi* or is it *amo?*

A FRAGMENT

YON bird is strong to fly—
How straight the balanced pinions scoop
Twin scimitars, that carve the cloudy group,
Or, rigid as a die,
Print their sad cypher on the polished sky!

TO W. E. HENLEY

HENLEY, what mark you in the sunset glare?
The year is dying: is that the crimson splash
Wherewith he seals his testament? the cash,
To some conveying of all things good and fair,
To others unutterable emptiness? the stare
Of folly at a bubble trimmed with trash,
Or at a flame, whose unsubstantial ash
Falls in a gaping darkness and despair?
Friend, scholar loved, look longer: how it glows,
Not glares! God opes a perspective to see
The chambers of the ivory palaces.
And who is that within its encircling rose?
Is it my Love that fondles some one? Yes!
Some one! O, yes! Your darling? Is it she?

WHEN LOVE MEETS LOVE

WHEN love meets love, breast urged to breast,
God interposes,
An unacknowledged guest,
And leaves a little child among our roses.

O, gentle hap!
O, sacred lap!
O, brooding dove!
But when he grows
Himself to be a rose,
God takes him—where is then our love?
O, where is all our love?

BETWEEN OUR FOLDING LIPS

BETWEEN our folding lips
God slips
An embryon life, and goes;
And this becomes your rose.
We love, God makes: in our sweet mirth
God spies occasion for a birth.
Then is it His, or is it ours?
I know not—He is fond of flowers.

EX ORE INFANTIS

HER husband died before her babe was born
Two years ago. *Converted?* Doubt and grief,
Poor soul! she felt. Her Methodist creed forlorn
Gave but a lenten substance of relief.
To-day, beneath the piteous gaze of morn,
Her child is dying. On his little brow
Descends the veil, and all is over now—
Not yet! not yet! For suddenly he springs,
As who perceived the gleam of golden wings.
"Dada!" he cries, he knows his father's face
Ne'er seen before. O God, Thou giv'st the grace!
O widowed heart! They live in Heaven's fair light,
Your husband with his boy. The child was right.

O GOD TO THEE I YIELD

O God to Thee I yield
The gift Thou givest most precious, most divine!
Yet to what field
I must resign
His little feet
That wont to be so fleet,
I muse. O, joy to think
On what soft brink
Of flood he plucks the daffodils,
On what empurpled hills
He stands, Thy kiss all fresh upon his brow,
And wonders, if his father sees him now!

TO G. TRUSTRUM

George Trustrum, ere the day be done,
I send a word to you.
Pale primrose masked the rising sun,
The setting bids adieu
In roseate veil to all the fears
And all the hopes of bygone years.

And I look back to joys long fled—
The boat, the "yarn," the height
Of Bradda's crown; but you, instead,
Look forward with delight.
God bless you! may each sun that goes
Give you the primrose and the rose!

AN AUTUMN TRINKET

WHY does she burn
These colours on my soul—where'er I turn,
Splashes of flame and pyramids of fire
That fill me with insatiate desire,
Making me yearn
For that which, with its own intensity
Death-poisoned, hastens not to be?

Even so, even so
It is—the brightest and the dearest go:
The thrift of our great Mother calling back
Her forces, that the Spring may have no lack
Of customed show.
Not less to us the things that most we cherish
Fade from our eyes, and perish, perish, perish!

RECONCILIATION

THERE is a place where He hath split the hills;
No water fills
The gap—
A bow-shot wide
Side stands to side,
Indenture perfectly opposed,
The outlet closed
By seeming overlap—
So severed are our hearts, so rent our wills;
And yet the old correlatives remain—
Ah! brother, may we not be joined again?

SAD ! SAD !

O, SAD when grass is green,
O, sad when blue-bells blow,
Sad, sad 'mid lily sheen,
Laburnum's rippled glow,
And all the things that grow,
And are not sad—
Sad ! sad !

O, sad when lambkins skip,
O, sad when children play,
Sad, sad, when to my lip
Is pressed the dewy may,
And all the bright things say :—
"Why art thou sad ?"
Sad ! sad !

Is it some tricksy Puck
That makes me causeless dole ?
Or does some vampire suck
The blood from out my soul ?
Or is it joy diviner,
Joy echoing in a minor,
Joy vibrant to its pole,
That seems but sad ?—
Sad ! sad !

Is it the ebbing ghost
Of God that leaves me dry
Upon a weary coast,
Beneath a burning sky ?

Is it His voice afar
That booms upon the bar,
And makes me sigh,
And makes me sad?
Sad! sad!

Or does the old travail-pain
Resume the mother-*geist?*
In some far orb again
Is boundless ransom priced
For others than for us?
In Mars, or Uranus,
They crucify the Christ?
So am I sad—
Sad! sad!

One thing appears to me—
The work is not complete;
One world I know, and see
It is not at His feet—
Not, not! Is this the sum?
Not, not! the Heaven is dumb—
I bear His stigmata
Or not—ah, who shall say?
Only it is most meet
That I be sad—
Sad! sad!

IN A FAIR GARDEN

In a fair garden
I saw a mother playing with her child,
And, with that chance beguiled,
I could not choose but look

How she did seem to harden
His little soul to brook
Her absence—reconciled
With after boon of kisses,
And sweet irrational blisses.
For she would hide
With loveliest grace
Of seeming craft
Till he was ware of none beside
Himself upon the place;—
And then he laughed,
And then he stood a space
Disturbed, his face
Prepared for tears;
And half-acknowledged fears
Met would-be courage, balancing
His heart upon the spring
Of flight—till, waxing stout,
He gulped the doubt.
So up the pleached alley
Full swift he ran:
Whence she,
Not long delayed,
Rushed forth with joyous sally
Upon her little man.
Then was it good to see
How each to other made
A pretty rapture of discovery.

Blest child! blest mother! blest the truth ye taught—
God seeketh us, and yet He would be sought.

THE SCHOONER

JUST mark that schooner westward far at sea—
'Tis but an hour ago
When she was lying hoggish at the quay,
And men ran to and fro,
And tugged, and stamped, and shoved, and pushed,
and swore,
And ever and anon, with crapulous glee,
Grinned homage to viragoes on the shore.

So to the jetty gradual she was hauled:
Then one the tiller took,
And chewed, and spat upon his hand, and bawled;
And one the canvas shook
Forth like a mouldy bat; and one, with nods
And smiles, lay on the bowsprit-end, and called
And cursed the Harbour-master by his gods.

And, rotten from the gunwale to the keel,
Rat-riddled, bilge-bestank,
Slime-slobbered, horrible, I saw her reel,
And drag her oozy flank,
And sprawl among the deft young waves, that laughed,
And leapt, and turned in many a sportive wheel,
As she thumped onward with her lumbering draught.

And now, behold! a shadow of repose
Upon a line of gray,
She sleeps, that transverse cuts the evening rose—
She sleeps, and dreams away,
Soft-blended in a unity of rest
All jars, and strifes obscene, and turbulent throes
'Neath the broad benediction of the West—

Sleeps ; and methinks she changes as she sleeps,
And dies, and is a spirit pure.
Lo ! on her deck an angel pilot keeps
His lonely watch secure ;
And at the entrance of Heaven's dockyard waits,
Till from Night's leash the fine-breath'd morning leaps,
And that strong hand within unbars the gates.

EUROCLYDON

SCARCE loosed from Crete—
Then, borne on wings of flame
And sleet,
The Euroclydon came.

Strained yard, bent mast,
With fury of his mouth
The blast
Compels us to the South

Canst see, for spume
And mist, and writhen air,
A loom
Of Clauda anywhere ?

Balked hopes, fooled wit !
Ah soul, to gain this loss,
Didst quit
The shelter of His cross ?

Dear Lord, if Thou
Wouldst walk upon the sea,
My prow
Unblenched should turn to Thee.

Wind roars, wave yelps—
To Thy blest side I'd slip,
Use helps,
And undergird the ship.

DISGUISES

HIGH stretched upon the swinging yard,
I gather in the sheet;
But it is hard
And stiff, and one cries haste.
Then He that is most dear in my regard
Of all the crew gives aidance meet;
But from His hands, and from His feet,
A glory spreads wherewith the night is starred:
Moreover of a cup most bitter-sweet
With fragrance as of nard,
And myrrh, and cassia spiced,
He proffers me to taste.
Then I to Him:—"Art Thou the Christ?"
He saith—"Thou say'st."

Like to an ox
That staggers 'neath the mortal blow,
She grinds upon the rocks:—
Then straight and low

Leaps forth the levelled line, and in our quarter
locks.
The cradle's rigged ; with swerving of the blast
We go,
Our Captain last—
Demands
"Who fired that shot?" Each silent stands—
Ah, sweet perplexity!
This too was He.

I have an arbour wherein came a toad
Most hideous to see—
Immediate, seizing staff or goad,
I smote it cruelly.
Then all the place with subtle radiance glowed—
I looked, and it was He!

MY GARDEN

A GARDEN is a lovesome thing, God wot!
Rose plot,
Fringed pool,
Ferned grot—
The veriest school
Of peace ; and yet the fool
Contends that God is not—
Not God! in gardens! when the eve is cool?
Nay, but I have a sign ;
'Tis very sure God walks in mine.

LAND, HO!

I KNOW 'tis but a loom of land,
Yet is it land, and so I will rejoice,
I know I cannot hear His voice
Upon the shore, nor see Him stand;
Yet is it land, ho! land.

The land! the land! the lovely land!
"Far off" dost say? *Far off*—ah, blessed home!
Farewell! farewell! thou salt sea-foam!
Ah, keel upon the silver sand—
Land, ho! land.

You cannot see the land, my land,
You cannot see, and yet the land is there—
My land, my land, through murky air—
I did not say 'twas close at hand—
But—land, ho! land.

Dost hear the bells of my sweet land,
Dost hear the kine, dost hear the merry birds?
No voice, 'tis true, no spoken words,
No tongue that thou may'st understand—
Yet is it land, ho! land.

It's clad in purple mist, my land,
In regal robe it is apparellèd,
A crown is set upon its head,
And on its breast a golden band—
Land, ho! land.

Dost wonder that I long for land?
My land is not a land as others are—
Upon its crest there beams a star,
And lilies grow upon the strand—
Land, ho! land.

Give me the helm! there is the land!
Ha! lusty mariners, she takes the breeze!
And what my spirit sees it sees—
Leap, bark, as leaps the thunderbrand—
Land, ho! land.

PRAESTO

EXPECTING Him, my door was open wide:
Then I looked round
If any lack of service might be found,
And saw Him at my side:
How entered, by what secret stair,
I know not, knowing only He was there.

EVENSONG

EASTWARD the valley of my soul was lit
This morning: now the West hath laid
Upon its fields the festal robe,
And East hath shade.
Full soon the night shall fit
Her star-besprinkled serge
On hill, and rock, and bay;
But even then behind the mounting globe
God makes a verge
Of dawn that shall be day.

ABER STATIONS

Statio Prima

Why do I make so much of Aber Fall?
Four years ago
My little boy was with me here—
That's all—
He died next year:
He died just seven years old,
A very gentle child, yet bold,
Having no fear.
You have seen such?
They are not much?
No . . . no.
And yet he was a very righteous child,
Stood up for what was right,
Intolerant of wrong—
Pure azure light
Was cisterned in his eyes;
We thought him wise
Beyond his years—so sweet and mild,
But strong
For justice, doing what he could—
Poor little soul—to make all children good.
I almost think—and yet I am to blame—
He was a different child from others;
He had three sisters and two brothers:
He seemed a little king
Among the children—ah! 'tis a common thing—
Parents are all the same—
You've seen those kings—yes, yes—

Of course . . . and yet . . . the righteousness . . .
The . . . Never mind! he came
With me to Aber Fall—
That's all, that's all.

Statio Secunda

Just listen to the blackbird—what a note
The creature has! God bless his happy throat!
He is so absolutely glad
I fear he will go mad.
Look here! this very grit
I crush beneath my boot
His little foot
Trod crisp that day—
That's it! that's it!
O, what is there to say?
The little foot so warm and pink!
O, what is there to think?
His mother kissed it every night
When she put out the light—
And where?
What is it now? a fascicle
Of crumbling bones
Jammed in with earth and stones.
You say that this is old,
A tale twice-told—
Say what you will:
Old, new, I swear
That it is horrible—
Horrible, blackbird, howsoe'er
The Spring rejoice you with its budding bloom—
Yes, horrible, most horrible!
Though you should carol to the crack of doom,

Poor blackbird! being so absolutely glad—
I hope he won't go mad.

Statio Tertia

The stream is very sweet
To-day . . . Just see the swallow dart!
How fleet!
It sent a shiver to my heart.
If he had lived, you say—
Well, well—if he had lived, what then?
Some men
Will always argue—yes, I know . . . of course . . .
The argument has force.
If he had lived, he might have changed—
From bad to worse?
Nay, my shrewd balance-setter,
Why not from good to better?
Why not to best? to joy
And splendour? O, my boy!
I did not want this argument in the least,
My soul had ceased
From doubt and questioning—
That swallow's wing!
What a transcendent rush!
Hush! hush!
Or, if you talk, talk low:
For . . . do you know . .
Just as the swallow dipt,
I felt as if a soft hand slipt
Its fingers into mine . . . he's near . . .
He's with us . . . 'tis not right the child should
hear
This jangling . . . low then, low!
Or this is better . . . go,

Go, darling ; play upon the bank,
And prank
Your hair with daisy and with buttercup,
And we will meet you higher up.
Now then . . . *If he had lived?* if my sweet son
Had lived? . . . You stare . . .
There ! there !
'Tis gone, 'tis gone—
It was the swallow's dart
That sent a shiver to my heart.

Statio Quarta

We have not seen the sun for many days,
But now through East-wind haze
He makes a shift
To send a luminous drift,
To which, as to his full unclouded splendour,
The meek, contented earth makes glad surrender.
God bless the simple earth
That gave me birth !
God bless her that she looks so pleased
The soul that is diseased
With this world's sorrow—Well, sir? ought to look? . . .
Beyond, and yet beyond: not in this narrow nook
Of His creation
Will God make up His book.
The whole is one great scheme
Of compensation—
The net result
Is all . . . I too have had my dream,
As from my nonage dedicate a μύστης
Of that great cult.

I saw Lord Love upon his galley pass
Westward from Cyprus ; smooth as glass
The sea was all before him. He, as κελευστὴς,
Stood at the stern, and piped
The rhythms ; but, ever and anon,
As worked upon
By some familiar Fury, grasping a scourge
(An amethyst
Fastened it to his wrist . . . Love's wrist !),
He ran along the *transtra*, and did urge
The rowers, and striped
Their backs with blood ; whereat they leapt
Like maddened hounds, and swept
The sea until it hissed.
Then I :—
"Lord Love, what means this cruelty ?"
But he to me
Deigned no reply :
Only I saw his face was wet with tears,
And he did look "beyond, and yet beyond."
But those men, fond
And fatuous, never turned
Their eyes from his, but yearned
With an insensate yearning, having confidence
That so it must be ; but on what pretence
I know not—Ah, most cruel lord !
Ah, knotted cord !
Dull plash
Of livid tissues ! flash
Of oars that smote the waters to a hum . . .
Come, come !
You've had enough of this—
But what I meant, and what you seemed to miss,
Was simply how the meek, contented earth,
That gave me birth,

Was pleased . . .
Then you of *soul diseased*,
And what not . . . excellent!
But that is what I meant.

Statio Quinta

The shepherd calls—
How these great mountain walls
Re-echo! See his dog
Come limping from the bog!
How far he holds him
With that thin clamour! Scolds him?
Or cheers him—which?
Say both—most like. The pitch
Is steep, poor fellow!
And still that bellow—
Ya, ya!
Whoop! tittiva!
And Echo from her niche
Shrieks challenged. Shout,
O shepherd! flout
The irritable Echo till she raves!
As man behaves,
So God apportions, doing what is best
For you, and for the rest.
As man behaves? You do not help me much,
Nay, sir, nor touch
The central point at all—
Retributive, mechanical—
I see it. But outside all this
I miss . . . I miss . . .
Sir, know you Death? Permit me introduce . . .
No? *What's the use?*
The use! . . . One thing I can collect,

You have but scant respect
For Death. Why, sir, he made a feint
That very minute at you—quaint!
The way he grins and skips—
Whips! whips!
Down! down! good dog! good Death!
To heel, you rogue!
Good Death! good dog!
You'd rather not behold him?
I've told him—
I' faith,
He'd frighten you, would Death.
Provoked me—yes, you did—
The shepherd chid
His lagging hound—
I had no other thought
But how mad Echo caught
The sound
Of that exasperant call,
And made it bound
Back from the mountain wall.

Statio Sexta

Ha! snow
Upon the crags!
How slow
The winter lags!
Ha, little lamb upon the crags,
How fearlessly you go!
Take care
Up there,
You little woolly atom! On and on
He goes . . . 'tis steep . . . Hillo!
My friend is gone,

Friend orthodoxo-logical—
He could not argue with a waterfall!
And here it is—my Aber . . . Stay!
I'll cross
This way:
The moss
Upon these stones is dripping with the spray—
And now one turn, left hand,
And I shall stand
Before the very rock: not yet . . . not yet!
O let me think! No, no! I don't forget
(Forget!)—but this is sacred . . . peace, then,
peace!
Release
From all dead things, that serve not to present
At my soul's grate the lovely innocent.
He had heard some idle talk
Of how his father had great strength to walk
And climb;
And so he thought that he must lose no time,
But instantly addressed
His little breast
To that tall cliff,
Smooth, perpendicular, too stiff
For cragsman from the wildest Hebrides,—
But he did bend his knees,
And spread his little arms, and laid
His body to the work, and made
Such genuine effort of ascent
As though he meant
To reach the top, of course, and had no doubt
Of what he was about—
So serious—no passing whim—
O, no! *'Twas thus his father clomb*
And he had come

To climb like him.
And is he here?
O Braddan, are you here?
O darling, have no fear!
Speak to me! breathe some fond thing in my ear:
But what should Braddan know
Of me, and what I am,
And what I want—the little lamb!
What should he know,
Who four brief years ago
Knew only what a little child should know!
Should some kind angel, who doth teach my child,
Some angel with the love-deep eyes,
Some angel charged to keep him undefiled,
Hear my sad cries,
And bring him unto me,
Is my whole heart a thing for him to see?
Am I prepared that his sweet honesty
Should search it through and through?
O, eyes of honest blue!
O, fearless eyes!
O, mild surprise!
O, is there one, one chamber of my heart
That's fit
For him to sit
Therein, till it is time to part?
Or could I come to him?
No matter where—
Swim,
Swim the dark river, and be there?
Could a deep acquiescence
Convey me to his presence?
And if it could,
What were it after all
But as a young prince stood

Upon the city wall,
And saw his foster-father at the gate,
And wondered at his mean estate,
And made no sign
Unto the warders? But my Braddan's mine!
Mine! mine! and none's beside!
O helpless men, has everything been tried?
Where does the secret bide?
Is it a simple thing perhaps?
Yea, after all, a very simple thing,
That through the lapse
Of all the ages any tide
Might bring,
Nay, every tide has brought
Up to the level of our thought?
Is the blest converse that I crave
The function of a faculty we have,
But know not how to use, being, by some dark mischance,
Time-prisoned in a rooted ignorance?
A faculty which, if no God forbad it,
An accident might bring to light,
And some one, somewhere, waking in the night,
Would know he had it.
But we are cumbered with our egotisms;
A thousand prisms,
Hung round our souls, refract the single ray,
That else would show us instantly the way.
So even now, when my sad heart aspires
To height of paramount desires,
These verses mock it
With their rhyme-jangles, frustrate as a rocket,
That mounts, and breaks, and falls in coloured fading fires.
A curse

Upon the impotent verse!
Yet, no!
Not so—
It may be that in these
The soul shall yet win something more than ease;
For song is of the essence, and who sings
Touches the central springs—
Ah, vain imaginings!
Let be! let be!
O Braddan, pity me!
Yes, yes!
I know there is another way—press, press,
And I will press, sweet Braddan.
Sink, thought! sink, sink!
To think
Is but to madden.
Stop, heart!
You have no part
In this—die, soul,
Die, die! it must be soon—
The barrier's but a film; one gasp, and I shall swoon
Into his arms—
Braddan! why, Braddan! see, I keep my tryst—
O God! O Christ!
That snow
Is very slow
To disappear: how winter lags!
I see the dam
Upon the crags;
But nowhere can I see the little lamb.

Statio Septima

The heavens are very blue
Above the western hill;

The earth is very still—
I will draw near, and view
The spot
Where he is . . . not.
But O dear cliff, O big, good-natured giant,
I think some delicate dint must still remain
On your broad surface, from the strain
Of limbs so sweetly pliant.
Behold!
The lamb! the lamb! fallen from the very rock!
Cold! cold!
Dead! dead!
His little head
Rests on the very block
That Braddan trod—
Dear lambs! twin lambs of God!
Old cliff, such things
Might move some stubborn questionings—
But now I question not—
See, see! the waterfall
Is robed in rainbows—what!
Our lambs? My Braddan shall have charge
Of him, and lead him by the marge
Of some bright stream celestial.
Braddan shall be a happy shepherd boy;
No trouble shall annoy
That soft green pasture—Ah, Murillo, saint!
Kind friend! that for all sorrowing hearts didst paint
John Baptist and the Lamb—those arms thrown round
That neck! Forgive me, God, that I have found
Some comfort in this little parable—
It gives me strength to climb the hill,
And humbly so return—

God bless the merry burn!
I have no will
But thine, O God! I know that Thou art true—
Be blue, O heavens, be blue!
Be still, O earth, be still!

LLANFAIRFECHAN,
April 17, 1879.

A MORNING WALK

"LIE there," I said, "my Sorrow! lie thou there!
And I will drink the lissome air,
And see if yet the heavens have gained their blue."
Then rose my Sorrow as an aged man,
And stared, as such a one will stare,
A querulous doubt through tears that freshly ran;
Wherefore I said:—"Content! thou shalt go too."

So went we through the sunlit crocus-glade,
I and my Sorrow, casting shade
On all the innocent things that upward pree,
And coax for smiles: but, as I went, I bowed,
And whispered:—"Be no whit afraid!
He will pass sad and gentle as a cloud—
It is my Sorrow; leave him unto me."

And every floweret in that happy place
Yearned up into the weary face
With pitying love, and held its golden breath,
Regardless seeming he, as though within
Was nothing apt for their sweet grace,
Nor any sense save such as is akin
To charnel glooms and emptiness of death.

Then sung a lusty bird, whose throat was clear
And strong with elemental cheer,
  Till very heaven seemed lifted with the joy :
Jet after jet tumultuous music burst
Fount-like, and filled the expanding sphere ;
Whereat my soul was fain to slake its thirst,
  Intent, and ravished with that blest employ.

The songster ceased :—articulate as a bell,
The rippling echoes fell and fell
  Upon the shore of silence. Then I turned
To call upon my Sorrow—he was not ;
But O, what splendour filled the dell !
There ! there ! O, there ! upon the very spot
  Where he had been an awful glory burned.

It was as though the mouth of God had kissed
And purpled into amethyst
  Wan lips, as though red-quickening ichor rills
Had flushed his heart : 'twas he no more, no more !
'Twas *she*, my soul's evangelist,
My rose, my love, and lovelier than before,
  Dew-nurtured on the far Celestial hills.

"O love," I cried, "I come, I come to thee !
Stay ! stay !" But softly, silently,
  As pales the moon before the assault of day,
So, spectral-white against the brighter blue,
Faded my darling. But with me
Walks never more that shadow. God is true,
  And God was in that bird, believe it as ye may.

EPISTOLA AD DAKYNS

DAKYNS, when I am dead,
Three places must by you be visited,
Three places excellent,
Where you may ponder what I meant
And then pass on—
Three places you must visit when I'm gone.
Yes, *meant*, not *did*, old friend!
For neither you nor I shall see the end,
And do the thing we wanted:
Natheless three places will be haunted
By what of me
The earth and air
Shall spare,
And fire and sea
Let be—
Three places only,
Three places, Dakyns.

I

The first is by the Avon's side,
Where tall rocks flank the winding tide
There come when morning's virgin kiss
Awakes from dreams the clematis,
And every thorn and briar is set
As with a diamond coronet—
There come, and pause upon the edge,
And I will lean in every ledge,
And melt in grays, and flash in whites,
And linger in a thousand lights;

And yield in bays, and urge in capes,
And fill the old familiar shapes ;
And yearn in curves, and strain to meet
The pensive pressure of your feet
And you shall feel an inner sense,
A being kindred and intense ;
And you shall feel a strict control,
A something drawing at your soul,
A going out, a life suspended,
A spirit with a spirit blended.
And you shall start as from a dream,
While I, withdrawing down the stream,
Drift vaporous to the ancient sea,
A wraith, a film, a memory—
Three places, Dakyns.

II

The next is where a hundred fells
Stand round the Lake like sentinels,
Where Derwent, like a sleeping beauty,
Girdled with that watchful duty,
At Skiddaw's foot securely lies,
And gives her bosom to the skies.
O, come ! and I will bid the moon
All subtle harmonies attune
That live in shadows and in heights,
A mystic chorus of delights.
O, come where many an island bevels
Its strand to meet the golden levels !
O, lay your heart upon each line,
So diamond-cut and crystalline,
That seams the marble of the mere,
And smoothes all trouble, calms all fear,
With that sweet natural straightness, free

From effort or inconstancy.
O, draw your thought with all its passion
Along the melancholy fashion
Of forms accentuate with the beat
Of the great Master's rhythmic feet.
But when upon the finest verge
The sense no further flight can urge,
When the full orb of contemplation
Is stretched, a nameless tribulation
Shall sway the whole, a silent stress
Borne in upon that loveliness;
A burden as of human ills,
A human trouble in the hills;
A quickening pulse in earth and sky,
And you shall know that it is I—
Three places, Dakyns.

III

The next is where God keeps for me
A little island in the sea,
A body for my needs, that so
I may not all unclothed go,
A vital instrument whereby
I still may commune with the sky,
When death has loosed the plaited strands,
And left me feeling for the lands.
Even now between its simple poles
It has the soul of all my souls.
But then—whatever I have been,
Whatever felt, whatever seen,
Whatever guessed, or understood,
The tones of right, the tints of good,
The loves, the hates, the hopes, the fears,
The gathered strength of all my years—

All that my life has in me wrought
Of complex essence shall be brought
And wedded to those primal forms
That have their scope in calms and storms,
Attunèd to the swells and falls
Of Nature's holy intervals.
And, old coeval use surviving,
No need shall be for any striving,
No need from point to point to press,
And swell the growing consciousness,
But in a moment I shall sit
Sphered in the very heart of it.
And every hill from me shall shoot,
And spread as from a central root,
And every crag and every spur
To me its attitude refer;
And I shall be the living heart,
And I shall live in every part,
With elemental cares engrossed,
And all the passion of the coast.
Come then, true Dakyns, be the test
Most meet to make me manifest!
Come, and immediate recognise
To all your moods the dumb replies.
Or stretch across a kindly void
The golden life-chords unalloyed
With thought, and instant they shall wake
The music they were made to make.
Thus shall you grow into a sense
Of islandhood, not taking thence
Some pretty surfaces and angles,
Tricking your soul, as with fine spangles
A savage studs his wampum belt,
But patient till the whole is felt,
And you become incorporate

Into an undivided state.
Then shall your body be as dead ;
And you shall take to you instead
The system of the natural powers,
The heath that blooms, the cloud that lowers,
The antithesis of things that bide,
The cliff, the beach, the rock, the tide —
The lordly things, whose generous feud
Is but a fixed vicissitude.
Wherefore, O Maughold, if he come,
If Dakyns come,
Let not a voice be dumb
In any cave ;
Fling up the wave
In wreaths of giddy spray ;
O'er all the bay
Flame out in gorse around the "kern," [1]
And let his heart within him burn,
Until he gains the slope
Where, in the "sure and certain hope,"
Sleep the long rows :
Then let him quench the fiery gleams
In Death's gray shadow of repose,
As one who dreams
He knows not what, and yet he knows
I have her there
That was a bud so rare.
But, Bradda, if he come to you,
I charge you to be true !
Sit not all sullen by the sea,
But show that you are conscious it is he.
It is no vulgar tread
That bends the heath :
Broad be the heavens spread

[1] Cairn.

Above, the sea beneath
Blue with *that* blue!
And let the whispering airs
Move in the ferns. By those strong prayers
Which rent my heart that day as lightning rends a cloud,
And rips it till it glares
To open view: by all the vows I vowed,
I charge you, and I charge you by the tears
And by the passion that I took
From you, and flung them to the vale,
And had the ultimate vision, do not fail!
Three places only—
Three places, Dakyns.

CLIFTON, *December* 1869.

NATURE AND ART

I

I ONCE loved Nature so that man was nought,
And nought the works of man:
Whether the human force that inward wrought
My vital needs outran,
And, bidden by great Pan,
In its all-quickening arms the visible deadness caught;

Or was it accident of time and place?
For men were few to see
Where I was reared, and Nature's copious grace
Of form and colour free
Eclipsed the piety
Of childish social loves, and motions of the race;

I know not quite : but this to me is known,
That, with a soft unrest,
Soul unto soul in perfect aptness grown,
I drew her to my breast,
A personal creature pressed,
Full of a passionate will, and moods that were her own.

Her own, yet, modulate and tuned to mine,
She shaped her meek replies
So that I ne'er bethought me to divine
If in her wondrous eyes
A light congenial lies,
Or, sprung from alien blood, insensate glories shine.

If homogeneous with me or not,
The question never tried me,
Or when, or wherefore, or of whom begot :
She seemed to stand outside me,
To soothe me and to guide me,
Another, or myself reflex, who cared one jot ?

Thrice blest if I might roam on fell or shore
In exquisite solitude,
And uncontrolled the ὰριστὺς pour
That with its interlude,
Far from all discord rude,
Comes once to fresh young hearts, and comes not evermore.

O, poet-flush of all-compelling youth !
O, great interpreter !
O, artist prescient of the higher truth !
O, confident Lucifer !
O, nobly prone to err !
O, shadowless of doubt ! O, innocent of ruth !

O, instinct vast! O, indiscriminate mind!
Not thus, but hesitant long,
That sculptor won the marble to be kind;
Thus rather, right or wrong
Untaught, Ixion strong
Held Nephele in arms a god might not unbind.

Then came the interact of will on will
The monad soul to frame;
And I was one of many, passion still,
And use, and praise, and blame,
The different, the same,
Shaping the definite self with change of good and ill.

A man with other men I had to dwell;
I had to love and hate,
To traffic with my heart, to buy and sell
Love's wares at current rate,
Mine enemies in the gate
With keen-edged sword of speech to harass and to quell.

Wherefore I come a being manifold,
Nature, to sue thy grace.
It is not that my heart is growing cold,
If, conscious of my race,
I look into thy face
With a less simple trust than that I felt of old.

It is because thou seem'st at our alarms
Unmoved: the ages fall
Helpless from out the rigour of thine arms,
Thou heeding not at all
If bridal veil or pall
Illustrate or obscure the glory of thy charms.

It is because, with all thy loveliness,
Thou hast no delicate flush
Of feeling instant in its brimmed excess,
And rippled at the brush
Of lightest thought: the hush
Is thine of ordered change, fixed and emotionless.

It is because thou canst not apprehend
Beyond our simplest needs;
Because, obedient to thy native end,
Thou knowest only deeds
Where link to link succeeds,
And no irrational gaps the golden sequence rend.

It is because the tracks of errant souls
Appear to thee so straight:
Unskilled to mark how latent force controls
The bias and the rate,
How inward grasping fate
Collects the various lines, and diverse sends the bowls.

Moreover, all the things that men have done,
The things that men have said,
Have made another light beneath the sun,
Another darkness shed,
Another soul-stream fed,
To cool in other wells, o'er other weirs to run.

I grant thou hast the very notes of prime,
But of the thousand tunes
Wherewith our summer loads the growing time,
The joyaunce of our Junes,
The full chromatic noons,
There is no scale to fit thy diapason chime.

Nor wilt thou, kindly monished, recognise
Of life the complex game:
We are not now as when, 'neath kindlier skies
Begot, to that great dame
Th' auroral offspring came;
We are no babes astride upon Eve's awful thighs.

So, haply, one has known a foster-sister,
And, when the years have gone,
Has felt, with all his hopes, as if he missed her,
And come, and looked upon
Her face, and proved anon
Her eyes were meaningless, and, sadly silent, kissed her.

II

O, Heaven! the mannikin! Is this gratitude?
"A foster-sister," saidst thou?
"A complex game?" What fell Locusta stewed
That damnèd fucus? Spread'st thou
The stuff upon thee? wed'st thou
That specious harlotry from Hell's black bosom spewed?

Up, up! for shame! She is thy sister: love her,
Come to her yet again:
Think not thine own quintessenced self above her!
O, see how she is fain
Her shyness to explain!
O, understand the blush her virgin cheek doth cover!

Eve, *Adam!* Yes, and all that Eden sap—
Is it impossible?
'Twould do thee good to lie in her great lap,

To have thy utmost will,
To fill thy utmost fill,
Creamed from the copious duct of that primeval pap.

Thou talk'st of music, and of tunes accord
With specialties to flirt—
What wouldst thou have? a homily—good lord!
A logic malapert,
With pretty fence expert,
The play of thy caprice infallible to ward?

O fool! O fool! This is the very acme:
Far, far within the cells
Of winding thought, where man may never track me
She takes me, and she tells
The quaintest things, and spells
Ineffable spirit-tunes, and lulls the cares that rack me.

O, twilight bliss! O, happy even-song!
How well I know thy power!
O heather bells, that peal your faint ding-dong!
O bee, in sunny hour
Urging from flower to flower
The shrill-resounding brass of thy most patient gong!

O prelude of the windy-wailing morn!
O long-drawn moorland whistle!
O rustling of the multitudinous corn!
O sough of reed or thistle!
O holy, holy missal
Intoned by hooded clouds! O joy that I was born!

But thou'rt a being manifold—alack!
And tak'st the simple sense
Into thy crucible, and giv'st it back

Brain-filtered and intense,
And Nature is too dense,
Forsooth! to hit thy scope, and imitate the knack!

Nay, what is this thou of thyself hast made?
Is this *development?*
O Lord of all the souls! is this the trade
For which we here were sent?
Is't not an accident,
By-play of function-work, by casual contact swayed?

'Tis not essential, though the world is roomy,
That I should coexist
With any animal *bipes implume:*
It is the core and gist
Of life that I should list
To Nature's voice alone, and hearken if she woo me.

But, as it is, innumerous bipeds press
And crowd on one another,
Nor would I have one animal the less;
And I must know my brother,
Some odd misgivings smother,
And smile, and chat, and take my commons with the mess.

Of course, the absolutest slave that crawls
Is social: so am I:
I have a place, I live within four walls—
Even horse to horse will try
Some matter of reply,
And hear his neighbour munch, and whinny o'er the stalls.

But this is accident, casual relation,
Wholly subordinate
To the main purport of our earthly station,
Which is to permeate
One soul with fullest freight
Of constant natural forms, not factual complication.

Else were our life both frivolous and final,
A mere skiomachy,
Not succulent of growth, not officinal
To what shall after be,
But Fortune's devilry
Of Harlequin with smirk theatro-columbinal—

A changeling life, that to the world's great heart
Just leans its elfish lips,
And soon falls off, and dies an imp confest,
And seeks the void, and skips,
As the dull Fury whips
The ineffectual ghosts, and drives it with the rest.

And, if the man has 'scaped such inanition,
Then why, returning here,
Does he not speak the language of contrition,
And strip the base veneer
From his poor soul, and fear,
And seek the long-lost love that saved him from perdition?

What means this talk of "complex game," and matters
That she "cannot divine"?
I tear this wretched sham of his to tatters:
O, blessed nature-wine!
O, sacred anodyne!
He is fact-poisoned, he! and knows not what he chatters.

Let him come humbly, let him make confession
It is no fault of hers
If he is all too dull to catch th' expression
Of her great thought, or blurs
Its mobile signatures
With mediate glare of self, and balks the true possession.

O sweet Titania, bedded in the lilies!—
I hate to think of it—
Pranking that ass's head with daffodillies,
That in his puzzled wit
Knows not thou art more fit
To hold in odorous arms the Peleïd Achilles!

And yet he says, his lip fastidious-curled:—
"She's unappreciative."
Take him, good Puck! I prythee have him hurled
To where he is more native,
To chums communicative—
Snout, Snug, the parish club he fondly calls the world!

For me the happiness—my good I find
In Nature's energies,
And am not frustrate. Nature is not blind
In promptings such as these,
But holds the secret keys,
Wherewith the wards that fence our hope she can unwind.

Both wrong, both right. 'Tis God appoints our state—
Nature and Art are one—

True art, true nature, never separate
In things beneath the sun.
So is His pleasure done,
Who moulds the wills of men, and grasps the bars of fate.

LIFE

O LIFE of man, if life 'tis meet to call
This rolling with a rolling ball
Some seventy periods round the sun—
O life, that only art to have begun
A life, then straight art not a life at all.

O rigid curve mechanical,
If thou wert only absolute,
If all our energies were summed in thee,
If one great pathos thrilled the iron ring,
If, points upon the circle, fixed and mute
We felt the dominant spring
And strain of power, then were it blest to be!—

Not death would all be death, if, truly free,
We had the motion of the sphere,
If no quick atom jarred
Oblique, and crossed the act divine,
And vexed the loyal round with idiot cheer
Of self, and scrabbled all the line
With zigzags of the will, and kindly oneness marred.

ALMA MATER

O MOTHER Earth, by the bright sky above thee,
I love thee, O, I love thee!
And yet they say that I must leave thee soon;
And if it must be so,
Then to what sun or moon
Or star I am to go,
Or planet, matters not for me to know.
O mother Earth, by the bright sky above thee,
I love thee, O, I love thee!

O, whither will you send me?
O, wherefore will you rend me
From your warm bosom, mother mine?—
I can't fix my affections
On a state of conic sections,
And I don't care how old Daedalus
May try to coax and wheedle us
With wings he manufactures,
Sure to end in compound fractures,
Or in headers at right-angles to the brine—
O mother Earth, by the bright sky above thee,
I love thee, O, I love thee!

I cannot leave thee, mother:
I love thee, and not another;
And I can't say "man and brother"
To a shadowy abstraction,
To an uncomfortable fraction,
To the skeletons of quiddities,
And similar stupidities.

Have mercy, mother, mercy!
The unjustest of *novercae*
Sometimes leaves off her snarlings
At her predecessor's darlings;
And thou art *all* my mother,
I know not any other.
O mother Earth, by the bright sky above thee,
I love thee, O, I love thee!

So let me leave thee never,
But cling to thee for ever,
And hover round thy mountains,
And flutter round thy fountains,
And pry into thy roses fresh and red;
And blush in all thy blushes,
And flush in all thy flushes,
And watch when thou art sleeping,
And weep when thou art weeping,
And be carried with thy motion,
As the rivers and the ocean,
As the great rocks and the trees are,
And all the things one sees are—
O mother, this were glorious life,
This were not to be dead.
O mother Earth, by the bright sky above thee,
I love thee, O, I love thee!

TRITON ESURIENS

How cold and hungry is the sea to-day,
How clamorous against the thrifty shore,
That yields not of her store
Save sands, and weeds, and pebbles of the bay!
"Give more! give more!"

Methinks I hear him say;
"And drive the hunger of my heart away!

"Give me of sunny flowers, of golden grain,
Of meadows sopped with sippings of the dew;
Small loss it were to you,
To me great solace of my endless pain;
For few! ah, few!
And shadowy and vain
The joys that haunt my solitary reign!

"Take me for ever to your constant breast,
O land, O lovely, most unchanging land!
Can you not understand
How all my restlessness desires your rest?
What murderer's brand
Is stamped by God's behest
Upon this brow, that you should loathe my quest?

"O mute, insensate land! nor voiceless she,
For she can speak, and I have heard her speak,
When zephyrs kissed her cheek,
Love-whispering in the twilight on the lea;
Then, hushed, and meek,
I've heard her gentle glee,
And schooled my heart to think 'twas not for me.

"Sometimes at evening I have heard you pray,
And listened, looking up the misty glen,
And only said *Amen*,
Else silent, lest one sound uncaught should stray;
And then, O then!
'Our Father,' you did say;
But I have been a wanderer wild alway.

"O, I am hungry, hungry at my heart!
Give me, O, give me, even of thy worst!
Give, as to one accurst,
Drear moorlands, and all rushy fens, where start
Black streams, that, nurst
In barrenness, must part!
Give me but wastes and snippets of the chart!"

Thus speaks the sea, his hue all ashen gray
With paleness of inveterate desires;
Then on the ebb retires—
Full strange it seems that that cold heart should sway
With passionate fires!
But ah! my soul can say
How vain it is when she requires
The coast, so near, yet on whose absolute spires
Looms the sad frown of an eternal "Nay."

ISRAEL AND HELLAS

I SOMETIMES wonder of the Grecian men,
If all that was to them for life appears:
Simple, full-orbed, they float across our ken,
And to their modern feres
Present the gathered light of all their years.

But was it all—the utmost of their reach—
That unto us the sedulous scribe has passed?
To carve on marble-slabs of that great speech
Great thoughts, that so might last—
Was that the single aim their copious souls forecast?

On them, high-strung (for so it seems to us),
Did no kind god distil a wholesome ease?
Laughed no fair child for good Herodotus?
Looked there no maiden of the midland seas
Into thy clear gray eyes, Thucydides?

One life, one work—was this to them the all —
God's purpose marked, and followed fair and true?
Or were they slaves like us, whom doubts enthrall—
A hesitant, futile crew,
Who know not what our Lord would have us do?

Was mind supreme? Was animal craving nought?
Or that the essence? this the accident?
Did it suffice them to have nobly thought?
And, the whole impulse spent,
Did the vexed waters meet in smoothness of content?

They ate, they drank, they married in the prime,
And tied their souls with natural, homely needs,
They bowed before the beadles of the time,
And wore the common weeds,
And fed the priests, and *ménaged* the creeds.

Or were they happier, breathing social free,
No smug respectability to pat
And soothe with pledges of equality,
Ironical, whereat
The goodman glows through all his realms of fat?

And was it possible for them to hold
A creed elastic in that lightsome air,
And let sweet fables droop in flexile fold
From off their shoulders bare,
Loose-fitting, jewel-clasped with fancies rare?

For not as yet intense across the sea
Came the swart Hebrew with a fiery haste;
In long brown arms entwined Euphrosyne,
And round her snowy waist
Fast bound the Nessus-robe, that may not be displaced.

Yes, this is true; but the whole truth is more:
This was not all the burning Orient gave;
Through purple partings of her golden door
Came gleams upon the wave,
Long shafts that search the souls of men who crave;

And probings of the heart, and spirit-balm,
And to deep questionings the deep replies
That echo in the everlasting calm—
All this from forth those skies,
Beside Gehenna fire and worm that never dies.

Yet, if the Greek went straighter to his aim,
If, knowing wholly what he meant to do,
He did it, given circumstance the same,
Or near the same, then must I hold it true
That from his different creed the vantage came,
Who, seizing one world where we balance two,
From its great secular heart the readier current drew.

DREAMS

It looks as if in dreams the soul was free,
No bodily limit checks its absolute play;
Then why doth it not use its liberty,
And clear a certain way
To further truth beyond the actual sea?

It is not so ; for when, with loosened grip,
The warder sense unlocks the visible hold,
Then will my soul from forth its chamber slip,
An idiot blithe and bold,
And into vacancy of folly skip ;

Or aimless wander on the poppied floor
Of gaudy fields, or, scarce upon the street,
Return unto the grim, familiar door,
And, coward, crave retreat,
As who had never been outside before.

What boots it that I hold the chartered space,
If I but fill it with th' accustomed forms,
And load its breathless essence with the trace
Of casual-risen storms,
And drag my chain along the lovely place ?

O, but if God would make a deep suspense,
And draw me perfect from th' adhesive sheath ;
If all the veils and swathings of pretence,
Dropt from me, sunk beneath,
Then would I get me very far from hence.

I'd come to Him with one swift arrow-dart,
Aimed at the zenith of th' o'erbrooding blue ;
Straight to the centre of His awful heart
The flight long-winged and true
Should bear me rapt through all the spheres that part.

But as it is, it is a waste of rest.
God uses not the occasion : on the rock
Stands prone my soul, a diver lean undrest,
And looks, and fears the shock,
And turns and hides its shame with some poor sorry jest.

PREPARATION

HAST thou a cunning instrument of play,
'Tis well; but see thou keep it bright,
And tuned to primal chords, so that it may
Be ready day and night.
For when He comes thou know'st not, who shall say:—
"These virginals are apt"; and try a note,
And sit, and make sweet solace of delight,
That men shall stand to listen on the way,
And all the room with heavenly music float.

PLANTING

WHO would be planted chooseth not the soil,
Or here or there,
Or loam or peat,
Wherein he best may grow,
And bring forth guerdon of the planter's toil—
The lily is most fair,
But says not:—"I will only blow
Upon a southern land"; the cedar makes no coil
What rock shall owe
The springs that wash his feet;
The crocus cannot arbitrate the foil
That for its purple radiance is most meet—
Lord, even so
I ask one prayer,
The which if it be granted,
It skills not where
Thou plantest me, only I would be planted.

OBVIAM

I NEEDS must meet him, for he hath beset
All roads that men do travel, hill and plain;
Nor aught that breathes shall pass
Unchallenged of his debt.
But what and if, when I shall whet
My front to meet him, then, as in a glass,
Darkly, I shall behold that he is twain—
Earthward a mask of jet,
Heavenward a coronet
Sun-flushed with roseate gleams—In any case
It hardly can be called a mortal pain
To meet whom met I ne'er shall meet again.

SPECULA

WHEN He appoints to meet thee, go thou forth—
    It matters not
If south or north,
    Bleak waste or sunny plot.
Nor think, if haply He thou seek'st be late,
    He does thee wrong.
To stile or gate
    Lean thou thy head, and long!
It may be that to spy thee He is mounting
    Upon a tower,
Or in thy counting
    Thou has mista'en the hour.
But, if he come not, neither do thou go
    Till Vesper chime.
Belike thou then shalt know
    He hath been with thee all the time.

"SOCIAL SCIENCE"

O HAPPY souls, that mingle with your kind,
That laugh with laughers, weep with weepers,
Whom use gregarious to your like can bind,
Who sow with sowers, reap with reapers!
To me it is not known,
The gentle art to moan
With moaners, wake with wakers, sleep with sleepers.

It must be good to think the common thought,
To learn with learners, teach with teachers;
To hold the adjusted soul till it is brought
To pray with prayers, preach with preachers.
But I can never catch
The dominant mode, nor match
The tone, and whine with whiners, screech with screechers.

Yet surely there is warmth, if we combine
And loaf with loafers, hunt with hunters;
It is a comfort as of nozzling swine
To row with rowers, punt with punters—
How is it then that I
Am alien to the stye,
Nor ever swill with swillers, grunt with grunters?

I cannot choose but think it is a blessing
To fool with fools, to scheme with schemers;
To feel another's arms your soul caressing,
To sigh with sighers, dream with dreamers—
But I can't hit the span,
The regulation man,
Ephemer decent with his co-ephemers.

Yet, after all, if frustrate of this pleasure,
To eat with eaters, drink with drinkers,
If I can't find the Greatest Common Measure,
And cheat with cheaters, wink with winkers,
At any rate the struggle
My truer self to juggle,
And force my mind to fit
The standard ell of wit,
Shall never dwarf nor cramp me,
Shall never stint nor scamp me
So that I bleat with bleaters, slink with slinkers.

Thus spake I once, with fierce self-gratulation,
Nor hoped with hopers, feared with fearers;
Yet, discontent, it seemed a mere privation
To doubt with doubters, sneer with sneerers:
It seemed more happiness
A brother's hand to press,
To talk with talkers, hear with hearers.

Wherefore, albeit I know it is not great,
Mobbing with mobs, believing with believers,
Yet for the most it is a snugger state
To gain with gainers, grieve with grievers,
Than, desolate on a peak,
To whet one's lonely beak,
And watch the beaver huddling with the beavers.

But though this boon denied, my soul, love thou
The lover, gibe not with the giber!
O ragged soul! I cannot piece thee now
That, thread to thread, and fibre unto fibre,
Thou with another soul
Shouldst make a sentient whole:
But I am proud thou dost retain
Some tinct of that imperial *murex* grain
No carrack ever bore to Thames or Tiber.

AT THE PLAY

As in a theatre the amusëd sense
Beholds the strange vicissitudes of things,
Young Damon's loves, the fates of clowns and kings,
And all the motley of the gay pretence—
Beholds, and on an acme of suspense
Stands vibrant till the curtain falls, door swings,
Lights gutter, and the weary murmurings
Of o'er-watched varlets intimate us thence:
Even so we gaze not on the things that are,
Nor aught behold but what is adumbrate.
The show is specious, and we laugh and weep
At what is only meant spectacular;
And when the curtain falls, we may not wait:
Death takes the lights, and we go home to sleep

III. NARRATIVE

MARY QUAYLE

The Curate's Story

We went to climb Barrule,
Wind light, air cool—
But when we reached the crest
That fronts Cornaa,
A black cloud leaned its breast
Upon the bay—
And, seeing from Ayre to Maughold Head
The long wings spread
Slumb'rous with brazen light,
Swift dropping from the height
We follow
The crags that northward shoot,
And find ourselves within the hollow
Of Gob-ny-Scuit—
Spout-mouth—so named because
It seems as if a giant's jaws
Gaped wide—
Ent'ring, we lay down side by side.

Then Richard said—
"This is the place—
Long years have fled;
But still I see her face.

Just here where you are she was—yes, just here—
I had long thought she loved me; but you know the
fear—
Had thought,—but now by what sweet word made
bolder
I cannot tell;
Only her dear head fell
Upon my shoulder,
And she looked up into my eyes—and this
Was our first kiss."

As Richard spoke, from out that awful cloud
The lightning leaped, and loud
The boom
Of the long thunder thrilled the deep'ning gloom
Then Richard spoke again—"That very day
Next year I came this way,
But it was different:
Yes, God had sent
A trial that was hard to bear;
And so I went,
And took my care
Up to these hills,
Alone, alone!
And knelt, and prayed to Him who bends our wills,
And can subdue them to His own—

"For Mary . . . Mary [Oh how the lightning
flashed!
Oh how the thunder crashed!]
Die? No, she did not die—I thought you knew—
Sir, Mary was not true. . . .
Yes, sir, I will be patient—you shall see—
Patient—Oh certainly—
Patient—God knows I am; God knows I've need to be.

"Mary was ruined, sir;
She bore a child that was not mine—
Nay, do not stir—
The lightning, is it? Sir, we may resign
What's ours, if so we make it happier;
But oh! to see it in the dust,
Down-trodden, broken—
Aye, and by one in whom you had full trust,
Stained and defiled,
This is the grief that never can be spoken—

"This was my grief. The father of her child
Was a young gentleman, who came to spend
A summer in the Island. Truest friend
He seemed to me—he had such hearty ways
With men like us. It was his holidays
At Oxford College—that's where scholars go
To learn for clergymen—but, sir, you know—
You were at Oxford—well, well, never mind—
I loved the lad, so gentle and so kind
He was; and fond enough he seemed of me,
And always wishing for my company.

"So he and I were friends, and took delight
In one another. Hadn't we the right?
And yet he never knew that Mary Quayle
Was anything to me. To hand the sail,
To steer, to haul, he would himself devote;
We never talked of sweethearts in the boat.
He wasn't much account when he began,
But came to be a splendid fisherman—
I taught him everything, except to swim—
He beat me there; and I was fond of him.

"The days were short, the leaves were thin and
brown,
When Mr. Herbert Dynely left the town.
I rowed him to the steamer: when we fetched,
He jumped upon the paddle-box, and stretched
His hand for mine, and would not let it go—
'God bless you, Dick!' he cried; 'I hardly know
If ever I shall see your face again.'
And looked and looked. I thought the very strain
Of truth was in his eye; and so I yearned
To him, and could not speak. But, if I'd turned,
I might have seen a window where a face
As white as death was glued against the glass —
Long after, when the talk was everywhere,
Some people told me who had seen her there.
It was an early sailing, and the sun
Shot in upon her, level like a gun—
And they saw her—
God in heaven!
(Forgiven! yes, forgiven!
But saw her.)
Stupid, half-naked, so they said,
Sprung from her bed,
Her breast
All pressed,
Crushed, murdered, on the sill,
Like a woman that's not respectable.

"No, I knew nothing all the time; nor after,
For many a week—I've sat with her, and chaffed
her
Because she was more silent than she used;
And yet she never looked a bit confused,
But sweet and gentle as a girl could be,
So sweet and gentle still she was to me.

Indeed, I think that she looked happier
Than ever she had done—I saw in her
A deeper joy; so that our love would seem
Sometimes a dream within another dream.

"And so it was: and what the dreaming meant
I had no thought, and I was quite content.
I looked into her eyes, and saw as far
As made me happy—that's the way we are—
A swimmer tips the tangles, can he know
The depth of water that there's down below?
I don't complain. I'm sure she loved me; yes —
The greater love had swallowed up the less.

"But still she loved me. Ah, sir! who was I?
A candle, when the sun is in the sky,
Is hardly noticed—did the night, no doubt;
But now you even forget to put it out.
He was that sun that rose in heav'n above,
And burst upon her in a blaze of love.
Poor candle! steady, burning to the snuff—
I know our love is only common stuff.
It's faithful as the mothers were that bore us;
It's just the love our fathers loved before us.
There's nothing fine about it, nothing grand,
Like fruit or flower that comes from foreign land:
A clover blossom where the bumbees cling,
And suck—that's all; you know the sort of thing.
A blackbird to his mate pipes nothing strange,
A sweet old tune, that has not any change.
So we, when we have told our love, are fain
To take a kiss, and tell it all again.
But true it is, the love no power can sunder,
The strongest love, is love whose root is wonder.

"And Dynely was a wonder over here,
Especially with women—far or near
You would not see his match—so generous
And free, and then so different from us—
His talk, his clothes, his way with every limb—
We hadn't any chance at all with him.
Ah, sir! compared with such a common clod
As me, this Dynely looked a perfect god—
There's nothing like it since the world began,
The beauty of a noble Englishman.

"And Dynely was no flirt, no butterfly,
That's always on the wing: he didn't try
To get the girls to gather all around him—
But rather serious in his ways I found him.
And when she came to know that she was dear
To such a man, poor Mary had no fear,
But only wonder: so that, when the crest
Of that great wave of love rose to her breast,
She floated off her feet, and drifted out
Into love's deep-sea soundings: no faint doubt
Was in her mind; through all the depths she clung
To that strong swimmer's arm; and, as he flung
Around her all the glory of his youth,
He seemed to her the very soul of truth.

"Ah, sir! it was a way with perils fraught,
If she had thought; but love is not a thought.
What thought she had was only that he'd take her
To some bright land of joy, where he would make
her
His queen, his . . . God-knows-what . . . some
fruitful land,
Where happiness would grow at his command,

Like grass in fields, and none their joys should sever,
And all her soul be satisfied for ever.
I see you understand—the reason why
Is plain—ah, who was I, sir? who was I?

"And yet . . . there's something bothering my brain—
Just wait a bit—I'll make my meaning plain.
You see, I've not the art you scholars learn
To find the very word for every turn
Of what you think, and feel within your heart,
Immediately—ah, sir! that *is* an art!
But this is it—you'll see it at a glance—
The man that paints a picture has a chance
To make it what he likes—he'll paint the trees,
He'll paint a baby on its mother's knees.
He paints the things that give him most delight,
He paints the things he longs for in the night,
And things that never were, and never could be,
He paints them up to what he thinks they should be—
What's this you call—imagination, ain't it?
Why, every yearning of his heart, he'll paint it.
He'll paint the very life, and make it start out
Straight in your face—the man can paint his heart out.
He's safe enough; and yet he needn't brag—
It's all between him and a canvas rag.

"And so you gentlemen that write the pō'ms
And stories, living in your pleasant homes—
You're not content with just the things you see
Around you, common joy and misery,

And life and death. You set yourselves to listen
To all the hearts that beat ; all eyes that glisten,
No matter where, you watch, you watch the faces ;
You write as if you lived in fearful places,
So that, at times, your best friends wouldn't swear
You are the steady gentlemen you are.

"All right ! all right again—no fear of you
But only tell me what are we to do !
We also have our dreams—be sure of that :
We also long, we hardly know for what.
God floods our hearts with all His melting snow,
And there's no sluice to take the overflow.
And so it often happens that the mill
Is swept away, or broken. You have skill
Of books and paints for what your mind contrives ;
But we can only put it in our lives.
There's many a poor man's daughter born with wings
Inside, that fret upon her heart like stings,
Till some one comes at last, and stands, and breathes
Upon the wings. Then from their golden sheaths
They flash into the light : with some of us
It's very hard indeed ; it's dangerous.

"But when poor Mary could not hide her shame,
And had to speak, it was her mother came
And told me all. At first, it hardened me—
But, sir, it was a common misery—
And who'd be more heart-broken than the mother ?
And so we tried to comfort one another.
The father was a fine old Methodist—
They said, when he was told, he clenched his fist,

And trembled like a leaf, and bowed his head :
But, when he raised it up again, they said
It was a sad, but still a lovely sight—
The old man's face was full of heavenly light.

"Yes, real pious Methodists they were ;
And that's what made it harder still to bear—
Being so much looked up to in the place—
It was a very terrible disgrace.
But, Methodists or not, we know who sends
The troubles ; and, except amongst our friends,
That know us best, we have not much to say
We suffer, and are silent—that's our way.
The women, too, with us, are very meek—
Poor souls ! it isn't for revenge they seek,
Or law, or money. Love is what they sought ;
And, if that's gone, then all the world is nought.
Revenge ? That's not the port for which they sailed—
For love they ventured, and for love they failed :
And so they'd like to die, if we would let them ;
And all they ask is just that we'd forget them.

"But, when her time was come, the mother sent
For me, and so I forced myself, and went ;
And stayed a while outside, and listened there,
And heard the preacher putting up a prayer,
And heard a long low moaning in the garret
You know what that was, sir—I could not bear it.
And when I saw a woman coming out
Upon the landing—well, I turned about,
And started home. But, somewhere near the mill,
I heard a step behind me—it was Phil,
Her oldest brother—she had three—
Fine fellows as could be, . . .

And she . . .
Was their joy and their pride . . .
Any one of them would have died
In a minute for her. . . . They loved to see her
So good, and so sweet;
And so she was, my darling, darling dear!
She was! she was! before this awful wreck—
And Philip took me round the neck,
And kissed me on the street,
And off without a word . . .
Mary! Mary!
I feel her in my arms . . .
Her mouth warms . . .
Yes then! press then!
Where then? There then!
Mary! Mary! . . .
The very ground she trod . . .
My God!"
[Oh how the lightning flashed!
Oh how the thunder crashed!]
Richard fell back, and would have struck his head
Against the rock; but I my arms outspread,
And caught him as he fell. He could not speak,
Scarce breathe. I raised him up, and stroked his cheek,
And cherished him, till, from the viewless bourn
Of death, the anguished spirit made return.
Then Richard spoke—
"I know that you must wonder
How Mary's brothers could be patient under
Such wrong, and such disgrace: perhaps you thought
They'd kill the man; perhaps you think they ought.
Well—that is not our way. Moreover, sir,
The lads were thinking not of him, but her.
They hadn't backed him, and they hadn't crossed him;

They hadn't loved him, and they hadn't lost him.
And now they could not hate him. He was just
A reef that they had split upon ; a gust
Of strong and terrible wind, that had capsized
The ship in which they'd stored what most they prized—
Or as the lightning there, that stoops, and kills,
And passes—vanishing behind the hills—
Who's angry with the lightning ?
Even so
They never talked of Dynely as a foe,
Nor talked of him at all ; but gathered round
Their sister in her sorrow—every sound
And every sight they thought would aggravate
Her trouble they would screen her from, and wait
And watch like three big dogs, and keep a ring
Of love and peace about her. Everything
They could they did : and when they saw her tearful—
Poor chaps ! they'd try to be a little cheerful :
And, when they could do nothing else, they'd sit
With her, and leave off talking for a bit,
And be a comfort to her—three of a size,
All pitying her with those big loving eyes.

"She was the loveliest thing they'd ever known ;
She was the youngest of them ; she had grown
Among them like a flower among the corn—
So, from the very minute she was born
They loved their little sister. And to them
The flower that drooped, and faded on the stem,
Was still their flower : the lightning-flash had scathed it,
And scorched the tender leaves ; and so they bathed it
With dews of love, and every sweet endeavour—
She was as beautiful to them as ever,

And twice more precious for her sorrow's need—
So God is gentle to the bruisèd reed.
Besides, they hoped for sunshine by and by,
If only they could coax her not to die.
No score but Time will wipe it with his sponge—
Too much to lose, they thought: so divers think, and
plunge.

"I wandered all that night upon the shore;
But, when the day broke, I was at the door
Again; and Philip told me that her child
Was born, and Mary seemed quite reconciled
To nurse it, and they both would live. I knew
That very minute what I had to do.
The packet sailed for Liverpool that day,
And I sailed with her. Yes, sir, as you say,
To speak to Mr. Dynely, if I could,
And bring him home to Mary—God was good
That had preserved her, and I thought he might
Do *his* part now, and come and make all right.

"I was most wretched, sir, aboard that craft—
Some chaps are very thoughtless;—and they chaffed
And bothered me. They're very different now
From fishermen like us; I don't know how,
But quite another sort—they hardly seem
Like sailors—maybe something in the steam.
But Corlett, that was skipper of the boat
(A better seaman never was afloat),
Reproved them very sharp, and made them cease
Their stuff, and then I got a little peace.

"I landed at the Stage, and looked about,
And hailed a Runcorn flat, just clearing out,
And jumped aboard: the skipper gave a curse;
His wife looked up, and asked if I could nurse,

And handed me the baby; so I sat,
And nursed a baby on a Runcorn flat—
And glad enough—God knows that I had need
Of something innocent; I had indeed—
Poor little things! But when the night came on,
And all the stars, the woman nursed her son,
And talked to me of heaven, and of another
That she had lost, a little baby brother—
And how *the world was full of sin and care—*
But God was all, and God was everywhere—
I told her nothing; but of course she knew
Far more than half my . . . Well, you know, they
do—
A woman has an art you'll never shirk,
She always knows another woman's work.

"At Runcorn, when I asked for Dynely Hall,
The only bearings I could get at all
Were just south-east; and so I bore away;
And, on the morning of the second day,
I saw the place before me. Aren't they grand?—
Those big old houses rooted deep in land;
And woods and park that stretch for miles and miles,
And meadows like long lakes of grass, and stiles,
And paths—and all so open and so free—
Ah, what's our Milntown, and our Nunnery,
Or Bishop's Court? Just think—the room alone—
No cropping every acre to the bone,
Like us. There's money at the back—that's it!
Yes, money: but there's more; there's noble wit,
There's ancient memories, use of generous ways,
And wholesome customs of the bygone days.

"So when I saw the glory and the strength
Of such a place, and when I saw the length

Of roofs, and spires, and gable-ends, and towers,
And high stone-windows cut in fruits and flowers—
And grass like thick-napped velvet on the lawn,
And all so quiet sleeping in the dawn—
I thought two thoughts—What right had I to bring
My trouble *there?* and then—What earthly thing
Could make it possible for Mary Quayle
To be the mistress there?—could love prevail?
Could honesty? . . . And then I stood uncertain,
Upon the stretch, as one who holds the curtain
Of some sound sleeper, knowing that he never
Will sleep like that again. And then a shiver
Came over me—a long dim driving scud
Of horror, and my eyes were burning blood,
And the world rose around me, and I fell
Forward . . . down to the very bottom of hell.

"Then from the pit I cried a bitter cry—
The pit indeed—I swore to God on high
This thing was wrong, and always must be wrong—
I swore it in the darkness: then . . . ding-dong . . .
The blood-bells bubbled in my ears like rain,
And earth and sky came back to me again;
And I was on my knees upon the sod,
And praying; and I said—
'O God, my God!
Thou art the Father of all souls: from Thee
They come, as equally ordained to be
The creatures of Thy hand, Thy sovereign might,
And they are equal, Father, in Thy sight.
O God! my God! in that sweet field of morn,
Where all the souls were waiting to be born,
Were they not equal? and, if not so now,
Who makes these differences? God, not Thou!
Not Thou! not Thou, my God! and love is Thine;

Thou pourest it into our hearts like wine
In golden cups ; and Love is just the same
As Thou art, God : he knows no rank, or name,
Or wealth, or place. He takes our hearts and binds
them
With links of fire—Oh, say not that he blinds them
With vain deceits ! not *that*, O Heavenly Father !
Not that, not that ! if truth is truth : say rather—
Wise Love comes opening our eyes to see
The stamp of natural equality.
O Lord, I pray Thee, let these two be one,
And as for me, O Lord, Thy will be done !
I will not say a word, a single word—
Thy will be done ! Thy will be done, O Lord !
I loved her—yes—perhaps I loved her most—
It might have been—O Lord, O Lord, Thou know'st.
And now be with me in this dreadful hour ;
Subdue the pride of man, and give me power
To sacrifice myself right out and through—
This much I ask, O Lord, this much I do.
O Lord, I claim to have no part or lot
In her ; I only ask to be forgot.
Make these two happy in their love, and then—
I'll manage—grant it, God of love ! Amen ! '
[No more the lightning flashed,
No more the thunder crashed—
But from the pilèd jet
Gleamed sheeted violet,
Which lent such grace
To that sad face,
My voice was all to seek ;
And when I tried to speak, I could not speak.
Then Richard smiled to see how absolute
The human tie that bound us—blessed fruit
Of strong coequal manhood. Then he spoke—]

"Day strengthened [Richard said]; I saw the
smoke
Rise from the roofs: the birds began their hymns,
And all the valley seemed to stretch its limbs,
And wake. It was a lovely spot; and so
I felt a great deal better,—cheerful—no—
But better; thinking God had heard my prayer,
And everything so pleasant and so fair.
And then, for coolness like, and also knowing
Where *he* would be, if there was fishing going,
I went and sat me down upon the brink
Of a fine stream, that had a merry blink,
And looked, so clear and quick the water ran,
Like our own rivers in the Isle of Man.
The sound was sweet, the wind came off the moor,
I might have been in Sulby, or Ballure.

"Then sleep came on me, and I dreamt a dream
Of Mary skipping to me 'cross the stream
Upon some stepping-stones; and I was standing
With arms stretched out to catch her at the landing;
And her sweet face was just a perfect sun
Of love and mischief. Suddenly—'Run, run!'
She cried, 'the child!' I looked, and all was dark,
Only I saw a little baby stark
Naked as it was born, and over it
I saw a ball of rosy flame that lit
Its little body, as it floated there—
I felt the night-wind whistling through my hair—
I saw poor Mary leap—I sprang to hold her—
I woke—and . . . Dynely's hand was on my shoulder.

"'Why, Richard, Richard! what on earth is this?
And what is up? and what has gone amiss?
And how in Heaven's name have you come here,

My lusty, trusty, Ancient Marineer!
Ha! Richard, you've been spreeing—that's your line!
You've been among the landsharks, Richard mine.
You steady chaps are far the worst, they say,
When once you cut the cable.' Just his way—
Landsharks, and *Ancient Marineers*, and that;
And gript my arm, and held my hand, and sat
Beside me.
But I turned away my head,
And . . . 'Sir, the child is born, the child,' I said.
He dropt me, gript me, dropt and gript again—
Gript like a vice; and . . . 'Richard! Richard Craine,'
He said—'Look here! look straight! look straight!' and turned me
Around to look at him full front, and burned me
With eyes like coals of fire—'Look straight!' says he;
'There's something in your face I want to see—
You loved her, Craine!' I gave him look for look
Ah sir, the murdering devil has a nook
In every heart—another move, a breath—
I might have had him in the grips of death—
Die him, die me, or die the two of us—
What matters it? The thing is thus and thus—
It's come to *that*—you don't know how or why
You don't know anything—— oh d—— you! die!

"Die—— yes—but Mary—— Mary was the thing;
And why was I at Dynely but to bring
That man to do the duty of a lover,
And come and make an honest woman of her?
And who was I to put between them? No!
Just let me see her happy, and I'd go,

And never more be heard of, never more—
You *can* do *that*. 'You loved her, Craine.' I swore
I never did . . . I had to do it . . . yes . . .
I had—God knows the lie ; but, nevertheless,
There was no other way in heaven above
Or earth beneath—it was the lie of love.

'I said that we were friends—that Mary's father
And mine had been old shipmates—that they rather
Had trust in me, and thought that I could tell
Their grief to him, through knowing him so well—
So I had come ; and *Mary was as pure*
As the unmelted snow, I said : *he knew her*,
I said—*she was a modest woman still*,
And all her people were respectable.
I said a lot of things : but then a cloud
Came on his handsome face, and he looked proud
And cold at me : again the devil hissed
Hot murder in my heart. I held his wrist—
It felt like paper, cracking in my span—

"And—' Mr. Dynely, you're a gentleman,
I said, 'and so our girls are only toys
For you to play with, slaves of lustful joys
To you, and such as you, that you may break them
For fun and fancy—eh ? that you may make them
A desolation, and a shame to utter,
And fling them on the cinders or the gutter,
As children fling their dolls ; and we must stand
Patient –we, fathers, brothers—move no hand
To right the wrong. It *is* a wrong ! what rule ?
What law is this ? who made it ? God ? That's cool !
What God ? whose God ? the God of heaven and
earth ?
The God that brings all creatures to the birth ?

The God Eve prayed to when she suckled Cain,
And Adam saw the milk? Your god is plain,
The devil-god, that made him kill his brother,
The god that sunders us from one another
In jealousy and hate, friend torn from friend—
In murder it began, in murder it will end.'

"My grip grew tighter—'God, and law!' I cried;
'Your god is Moloch, and your law is pride—
Hell's pride; man's law—man therefore can reverse
it—
Stand up with me, I say, and curse it! curse it!
Curse it! it is no part of God's great plan—
A gentleman!' stand up, and be a man!'

[While Richard paused, as if the passionate speech
Had overmastered utterance—lo! a breach
Of purest sky, seaward, diagonal
From north to south; on either side, a wall
Black, feather-edged with sheen of silvery bars,
And in the interspace were many stars.
I saw it, but was silent. Richard broke
A way for prisoned words, and thus he spoke—]

"If I had not been blind with grief and passion,
I could not but have noticed how the fashion
Of Dynely's face was changing all the while—
But now I saw it—saw the sweet bright smile
Spread out through tears; and—'Richard Craine,'
he said,
'I come on Friday.' Then I fell stone dead—
You see, the tramping, and the want of meat,
And all—I just fell senseless at his feet.

"He raised me though, and made me take a sup
Of brandy from a little silver cup

He had with him, and gave me food he'd brought
For fishing store: and then, like losing thought
Of all our cares, as, when a storm has passed,
Two vessels, hull to hull, and mast to mast,
Lie on the heaving calm—just so we lay,
And talked chance talk—of herrings in the bay,
And six-foot congers—*did I catch them often?*
There's men would talk of congers in their coffin—
Chance talk, chance talk—that's it, and very much
Like dropping stones in water . . . touch-touch-touch—
That's all—and so I said I thought I'd hook it;
And Dynely gave me money, and I took it—
I did—you see, I didn't want to lose
A minute getting home, and to refuse
Seemed foolish pride; and, on the other hand,
To take—— but, sir, I see you understand.

"He showed me where the railway ran aback
The hills. I said good-bye, and didn't slack
Until I reached the level—then I stopped,
And saw him stretched upon his face arm-propped,
Arm-buried from the world of living men—
Ah sir, I could have ripped my heart out then,
And flung it back to him—'He's good! he's good!'
I cried, and turned, and sprang into the wood.
Thank God that that last moment I had grace
And power to see that Dynely was not base,
To feel that he was good, sound at the core—
Because . . . because . . . I never saw him more!

"How sweet the night is getting! [Then said I—
'It is a lovely night'—whereat a sigh
Came trembling to our feet, then paused, as failing
Against the rock, then fluttered into wailing,

And wheeled adown the farthest bourn of west—
'The thunder-wind is dying in its nest,'
Said Richard: but I knew not what to think,
So human was the sorrow, to the brink
Of syllabled utterance urging awful cares—
I followed it with wishes and with prayers.
Then Richard said—

"The boat was late, the evening air was cool,
The sun's last light was creeping up Barrule;
The place looked very happy, very sweet;—
And I was happy. Up Kirk Maughold Street
I met the brothers. Heavy with distress,
They looked at me: but all I said was 'Yes,
He's coming'; for they knew where I had gone—
I saw they did—they nodded, and passed on,
Suspicious, whispering, or seemed to be,
And all the people stood and stared at me.

"But I went up to Mary's. Mrs. Quayle
Was standing at the door: I told my tale—
She couldn't speak, she hardly raised her head,
But fell against the door—'Come in,' she said.
Old Quayle had got the preacher, Mr. King,
A Bible gript between them arguing;
And, just as I was standing at the sill,
The preacher snatched the Bible from him, till
He'd find a text to pin him. Low, quite low,
Says Mrs. Quayle, 'He's seen him—*him*, you know.'
The Bible straddled somewhere in their laps,
Old Quayle heaved back his head, and sighed; perhaps
It was the waking up of all the grief
Had slept awhile, perhaps it was relief

From preachers' talk, because there are, no doubt,
Some preachers that you'd rather do without,
When you're in trouble ; and old Quayle was all
For peace and holy joy, like John, like Paul,
For quietness, and prayer, and meditation—
Though Paul—— I think—— but smelling provocation
Was King's delight ; but still I've understood
He was a man that did a deal of good.

"And now I told them what I'd seen and heard,
How I had met with Dynely—every word
He'd said to me ; but not, of course, what I
Had said ; and Mrs. Quayle began to cry.
But all the time that I was speaking there,
I saw the preacher working in his chair,
And now a sniff, and now a snuff—'I know,'
He seemed to say, 'what you're a coming to.'
And when I told how Dynely had agreed
To come next boat—'Indeed,' he said, 'indeed!'—
And sniffed. But now an argument began
Between himself and Mrs. Quayle—*What plan*,
He said, *should be adopted in this case*—
And—*how astonishing it was to trace*
The hand of Providence ; how human ill
Was overruled for good ;—unsearchable,
The preacher said, *it was*, *past finding out*,
Like all God's ways. See how He'd brought about
A full conviction! see the sinner's sin
A cause of grace! but not to walk therein—
He said—*No, no! And Mary's change was deep*,
He said, *and highly promising—a sheep*,
He doubted not, brought home upon the shoulder
Of the Good Shepherd. Now then, if they told her
About this Dynely, where was all his wrestling?
This work would be disturbed, this lamb, a-nestling

Upon the Saviour's bosom, would give ear
To wolves without the fold: and so, one dear
To him by precious ties would fall away;
And God would question at the Judgment Day.

"Poor Mrs. Quayle had not the slightest chance
With King—indeed, she hardly made advance
Beyond some simple words, like—'Surely! surely!
They're better married.'—'That's a point maturely
To be considered, ma'am; and on your knees.
Just think of all the pomps and vanities,
And sinful lusts. You know how Mary stands
At present—Could she be in better hands?
A state's a state, regard it as you will—
Disturb that state, and who's responsible?'

"'Ah but,' she said, 'if Mr. Dynely come,
And want to marry her?' He looks as glum
As thunder—'When did Mr. Dynely say
He'd marry her at all?' and—'Let us pray!'
He says, and knelt. But those were words to pierce
The woman to the heart. She stood up fierce
And stiff—she would not kneel: I got beside her,
And held her hand in mine. The old man eyed her
With sad and wondering look. The preacher
frowned,
But prayed—when . . . suddenly . . . we heard a
sound,
A sweet low tune—— 'twas in the room above—
O sir, my heart filled over—Love! love! love!
O love! O death! . . .
But, sir, the preacher stayed,
He rose; he listened—'Yes, it's sweet,' he said;
'It's sweet; she often sings like that, poor thing!
And hardly knows—' I felt the mother spring,

Although she didn't move—'Oh, is she crying?'
I said—'Oh, is she, Mrs. Quayle? or dying?
Oh, dying! dying! Mrs. Quayle!'—'She may be,'
The woman said; '*that's* singing to her baby,
At any rate,' she said. You see, she knew
The sort of sound, as if a baby drew
The song and suck at once—Ah, trust a mother
To tell that tune of tunes! There is no other
Like that, of all the tunes—'She hasn't nursed
Her baby for a week: we feared the worst,'
The mother said. 'But now—oh why, oh why
Are you so cruel? Sir, she need not die;
She need not, Mr. King!'
She stopped; the song
Continued—All at once—'I think we're wrong,'
The old man said; 'this lies beyond our power,'
And all his face was like a lovely flower—
'We'll go and tell her.' Then he rose, and went;
And with him went his wife. The preacher bent
His head, and muttered something—didn't speak;
I saw the tears were rolling down his cheek.
We left together—'In your prayers to-night
Remember me,' he said; 'good-night! good-night!'
They're hard on human nature, bound to be;
But still they can't get over it, you see.

"I heard next morning, when I gave a call
Up-street, that Mary wasn't pleased at all
With what I'd done—it took her unawares—
If people just would mind their own affairs,
She said, *it would be better—mind their own;*
She only wanted to be left alone!
She wanted nobody to come and see her—
It was as Death had whispered in her ear
And spat into her mouth, and sucked her breath—

There is a kind of drunkenness of death
She'd got; she'd bathed her feet in death so long
That it had lost the chill: and Death is strong,
But Hope is stronger—— bully Hope! heart's-ease!
Sweet Hope, young Hope, that climbs upon the knees
Of Death, and hangs upon his neck! and so
I knew that it would be with her. No, no!
We're not so fond of Death.
That very day
She nursed and nursed the little one, that lay
Upon her breast, a helpless snuggling bit
Of innocence. They said her face was lit
With pride, if any one could call it pride—
Poor thing! and when she laid it at her side,
And raised herself, she kissed the little foot,
And talked of flowers, and where they should be put
To make the room look nice; and kissed her mother.

"Next day was Friday; then she couldn't smother
Her longing any more; she couldn't rest
A minute with them; wanted to be drest;
Sang to the baby, danced it, held it off
At arm's-length from her, till she made it cough
And blink; and then she nursed it for a while;
And then she lay quite peaceful—such a smile,
The mother said, and such a lovely bloom,
To see her tidying about the room!
And she would have the window open —yes—
The window—begged her mother with a kiss
To have the window open, so that she
Might hear the tug of paddles out at sea.

"The steamer came—I waited till the last—
No Dynely—no! I made the painter fast,
And jumped aboard the boat: I went below,

To see if he was there—but—Dynely ?—no !
He hadn't come. I went ashore again ;
I saw the brothers standing at the lane ;
And, when they saw me by myself, they turned,
And walked away, they did. My head, sir, burned
With misery—O God of Israel !
And then . . . and then . . . I had to go and tell.
I made it look as likely as I could ;
He hadn't come ; but then of course he would—
Next boat, no doubt. And so they thought it better
That Mary should be told—*No doubt, a letter*
Had come by post—they'd have it in the morning :
And so, without the smallest bit of warning,
They told her—'Shut the window *now*,' she said ;
And then her mother wrapt her in the bed,
And felt her all a-tremble.

Morning came—
No letter, but the paper, and a name
That made me start—'Births, Marriages,' you know,
'Deaths . . . Herbert Dynely, Dynely Hall'—just so—
And, in another place, 'Sad accident.'
It seems, soon after I had left, he went
Far up the river to a place where rocks
Run out, and make a gully : two big blocks
Lean from each side, as if inclined to meet,
One higher than the other—fifteen feet
Of slant apart. The downward jump was hard,
The up was worse ; and yet the man who dared
The one must dare the other : from the ledge
On which he stood the cliff was like a hedge
Behind him, six good fathoms, smooth as glass :
Below him, from the throttle of the pass,
Half choked with churning stones, the water slid
Into a deep black pool. The jump was called the
Strid.

"They found him in the pool, and people thought
He must have had a salmon on, and brought
His fish into the narrows. Then, you see,
He couldn't play him there; so jumps to free
His running tackle; doesn't do to jerk him —
Jump back again 's the only way to work him—
Jumps, misses, strikes the crags, back, front, good
God!
Stunned, bleeding, helpless, still he holds the rod,
And held it when they found him—dead enough—
Just where the water shoaled: the gear was tough;
The salmon was below him, fast as glue—
The rascal—sulking, wondering what to do.

"So that's how Dynely died. This news was broke
To Mary very gently. No one spoke
But what they had to speak, and all combined
To be as helpful, and as good and kind
As ever they could be. But that strong love
Of Death came back upon her now, and strove
Against our kindness. Most of us, indeed,
Knew what must be the end: such strains exceed
The strength of human hearts. Before she died,
She sent for me. I stood at her bedside . . .
Bedside . . . bedside . . . O sir, the other hopes!
The other thoughts! . . . O sir, man only gropes,
At best, through darkness: here, at last, was light--
But not of this world.
'Twas a lovely sight,
But terrible . . . poor darling little bed—
Poor lamb! poor dear! But how I stooped my head
Against her lips to hear her whispering,
And what she said, that was not anything
But sweet low sighs—and what I could not say,
No matter how I tried, and came away,

And left her, when they told me. . . . Wait a bit . . .
That is . . . that must be. . . . O sir, *this* is it . . .
Young Dynely lies in Dynely church; and she
Lies *there!*"
He pointed where above the sea
Saint Maughold's Church lay girt with cross and rune
And grave. . . . Just then forth sailed the stately moon
Full-orbed; and, from a vista of retreat
Cloud-caverned, lo! a face divinely sweet
Looked forth, and, every fold distinct with light,
Soft garments floated on the field of night.
"Behold!" I cried, "O Richard mine, behold
The robe of silver, and the crown of gold!
See, see! she smiles!" Straightway the vision passed:
But Richard spoke not, only held me fast
By hand and arm—We rose, and down the slope
Walked silently—— O Love! O Death! O Hope!

BELLA GORRY

The Pazon's Story

Westward to Jurby, eastward if you look,
The coast runs level to the Point of Ayre,
A waste of sand, sea-holly, and wild thyme—
Wild thyme and bent. The Mull of Galloway
Is opposite. Adown the farthest west,
Not visible now, lie stretched the hills of Morne.

A cottage, did you say? Yes, once it was;
A ruin now—the naked gables stand

Roofless—the walls are clay, save where round stones,
Picked from the beach, supply the mason's art
With base Cyclopean. See the narrow hole
That served for window! see the poor dead hearth.
This was the home of one whom, for the wealth
And strength of her great love, I call not poor—
Else, poor indeed. The story of her life
You'd like to know? So far as known to me,
You shall—a simple story 'tis in sooth,
And somewhat sad. Yet in the simple fact
God often speaks: and, as for sadness, sir,
I think such sadness is a thing most sweet.

The marriage tie, the household ordinance,
The regulated decencies, the home,
Are God's appointment—so to train a race
Healthy and strong; yet can He nurture strength
And beauty in mere wildings—grace and joy,
Nay, goodness, and the firmest bond of love—
Firmer, it may be, for the sense in both
Of helplessness, of grave neglect, and scorn—
Firmer, as fastened in the absolute root
Of sheer maternity, where fatherhood
Is but the remnant of a weary dream.
So, while our gardens bloom, a humble flower,
Flung o'er the wall, may take the dews of God,
And breathe His air, and, in the wilderness,
Unfold the lovely splendour of a rose.

When Bella Gorry came to dwell amongst us,
She was not young. Full thirty years, at least,
She'd seen: she was a stranger to us here,
A south-side woman. We were harvesting
When first she came, and joined the shearers: none
Knew where she lived, or how; until, one night,

Passing among the bents, I heard a cry
As of a child, and heard the murmured song
Wherewith the mother sought to quiet it—
And this was Bella Gorry. Round her rose
The swelling sand-heaps; it was in September,
A starlit night. A fence of sods uptorn
Encompassed her; and she had hollowed out
The sand, and made such shelter as she could.
But it was cold, and she had bowed her head
Over her babe, herself to sleep inclined—
And still the cry, and still the drowsy croon.

I stood amazed; for in the Isle of Man
Our poor are not neglected. You indeed
Must know such sights familiar: in the streets
And purlieus of great towns, the homeless wretch
Is never wanting, nor the country-side
Lacks its appropriate vagabond—the *tramp*,
Is't not? you call him—who in hedge or ditch
Lies hungry, gazing upward to the stars.
To him the state assigns a scanty dole,
Which he rejects. Not so with us—our poor
We deem God's charge, an individual care
To every Christian man, which whoso slights
God's ordinance slights—
Therefore I stood amazed;
And asked her who she was, and where her home.
She did not stir, but answered moodily—
"My name is Bella Gorry; and I have
No home but this."—"Then come with me," I said;
"The little one is cold: it is not fit
That you should lodge like this.' But she no word
Replied; only she tightened that close grasp
Wherewith she held the child; and I could hear
Deep breathings of her breast, that seemed like sighs—

So that I knelt, and prayed. Then to my prayer
I knew that she attended. Nay, I prayed
In all humility: for now I felt
I was confronted with the deepest wrong
That man can do to woman, cause for shame
To me and all men. So I prayed that God
Would pity us, and, in His wisdom, make
This wrong thing right; give comfort to this heart
Nigh broken, and dispose her to remit
Her grief to Him, and to regard in me
His minister for such relief designed.

But vain my prayer, or seeming vain, for she
All proffered aid refused, and lifted up
At last her head, and, with unloving words,
Bade me be gone. I went, but firm resolved
What I should do. The earliest light of morn
Found me upon the field, where, one by one,
The shearers entered, till the field was full.
And Bella sheared—but she had left her babe
In that dry hollow far among the bents,
And ranged her with the shearers. Then I spoke
To some I knew most apt, but chief to him,
The master of the farm, a soul full fraught
With love and active goodness. He for me
A willing band detached. I led them where
The child lay sleeping—in its little hands
Blue-bells fast clasped, and 'neath its head soft moss,
Plucked from the mooragh. Then a little girl,
The farmer's daughter, took the child, and fed it
With milk, and nursed and danced it till it crowed.

But we with spade and pick unceasing worked
Till we had reared the framework of this cot
You see. Nor did the mother know, before

Noon glowed, and, stealing from the harvest field,
She sought her child : and she was well content.
And when, or e'er the week was out, the roof
Stood thatched and necessary furniture
Of bed and board, by kindly hands supplied,
Was stored within, she saw, and the dull cloud
Broke ; and her soul was lightened, and she came
To me, and, with the rush of many tears,
Yet guarded by a fence of dignity,
How found I know not, she poured forth her thanks
And blessings. So it was that Bella came
To dwell within my parish, and to be
My friend most loved, and worthy of my love.

This was her home ; for many quiet years
She lived within these walls, and had such peace
As theirs may be, whose purpose is to guard
One precious treasure, being all that's left.
It was a little girl that made her glad—
For she could yet be glad—a very star
To light her life : and well she tended it,
And saw it grow in beauty and in strength ;
And took it with her to the harvest field,
Or other work, as needs she must, who lived
A lonely woman. I have seen the babe
Against a stook soft propped of drooping sheaves
Asleep, or, wakeful, gazing on the clouds ;
And I have noted how the field was hushed
In silence. Only, ever and anon,
Some woman's heart would yearn for very love,
And make her quit her shearing rank a space,
To kiss this flower that smiled amid the corn.
Then would some strong man say—"Let me kiss too"—
But others said that it was naught, and murmured

Of *evil ways*, and *lightness not rebuked*,
And *sin encouraged*. Still the baby smiled;
And Bella reaped, and answered not a word.

So 'twas one day I came into the field
Where she was reaping, and I heard the voice
Of strong contention—it was Henry Tear,
My tenant—but you do not know the man—
He rents the glebe—a worthy soul enough,
And not ill-natured. What had angered him
They did not tell me; possibly some slackness
About the work, and how the women lost
Their time. He did not see me: hot and fierce,
I heard his last words only. Bella stood
Before him, pale and trembling—"Take the child
Away!" he said, "and bring it not again!
I will not have this bastard in my field."
And no one spoke.
Then from behind the stook
I stepped, and took the little one, embraced,
As in the church I hold them at the font,
So by the altar of the golden sheaves
I held the child, and signed her with the cross,
And said Christ's words—ah, blessed, blessed words!
How we *should suffer them to come to Him*,
And not forbid them, for of such God makes
His kingdom. And I turned to Tear, and said—
"You must become even as this little child,
If you would enter heaven at the last.
Then let it lie, a little piece of heaven
Upon your field."
But he was much rebuked,
And leaned his arms upon the hedge, and leaned
His face upon his arms, and strove to hide
His shame—and I remember it so well—

That is the field, high up upon the brow,
Near the cliff's edge—it was a lovely day,
But hot with hum of bees, and glare of sand,
And thunder, and the trouble of the shearing,
And Tear was angry ; but I conquered him.
You smile—ah well—you are quite right—I'm not
A man to conquer—— anything, perhaps—
Nay, sir, the thing is so—and yet we have
Our little triumphs—little vanities,
No doubt, were better said ; but God knows all—
Knows all—knows all—knows all. But think not, sir,
The little one was not baptized before,
And dedicate to God with holy rite.
'Twas but my parable, a way to reach
The good man's heart, for he was really good,
And felt it. So our little Sarah grew.

Now, as she grew, she lacked not, as beseemed
Her age, for sweet, or toy, or cap, or frock,
Gay ribbon, cloak as gay. Good Bella's store
Sufficed for all ; nor would she have her child
Stinted of aught. It seemed as if, beside
Her love, she had a need of some delight
In form and colour, some embodiment
Of dreams, ideals, nurtured in the waste
Of hope forlorn, and purpose unfulfilled—
Imperfect turned to perfect, dark to dawn—
God's magic for great sorrows.
So she wrought,
Instinctive artist, coveting the grace
Of utmost finish for the one pure gem
Saved from her life-wreck : so it seemed to me,
Much pondering how the sweet fantastic joy
Expanded to an outlet of constraint—

Uncertain—certain, simple recompense
Ordained of God for women who have loved
And lost, yet cherish beauty, knowing it
A good, although it has not been to them
A good. To them a little child becomes
The glory of the prime, the incarnation
Of that which should have been, nay was, and is
For ever glowing in the secret depths
That feed the springs of action—from what type
Of mean inadequate idol caught, what hero
Proved unheroic, matters not, it seems,
Since love transfigures baseness.
You have seen them
Doubtless, these mothers —and you have observed
How fierce they often are, what stern regard,
What fire ascetic, jealous, watchful, burns
In her poor eyes, *who holds her babe a trophy*
Snatched fearful from the vanquished field of love,
And, as a trophy, decked. No words of mine,
Dear sir, I beg to say—I mean, that flight
About the *trophy*. 'Twas Professor Jones
Of Oxford, reinforcing my poor speech
One day—Professor Jones—Professor Jones—
A very clever man. But I rebuked him,
For, though we pity, we should not encourage,
Nor clothe with specious names what God has cursed.
Professor Jones was here? Oh yes –you know him?
You are from Oxford? really! ah then
You'll understand how the Professor smiled
His weary Oxford smile, and said no more.

But I apologise. I loved the child.
I loved her very much. And I have gone

And watched the mother playing with her child,
Myself unseen, and marked the greediness
Of her great love; until, one Saturday,
My sermon finished, ere the sun had set,
I went to Bella's cottage. She had washed
The little one, and laid it like a pearl
Upon her breast. Then I entranced beheld
The glory and the splendour of the babe,
And Bella lifted her upon the bed,
And asked that I would pray. Then side by side
We knelt and prayed: and, as I prayed, I saw
The crimson flush that entered at the door
Pass straight between us to the sleeping child,
As it had been its angel. When I rose,
Bella remained upon her knees, her face
Deep hidden in the coverlet, nor moved
Before I left. O sir, what strange sweet throb
Surprised my heart!—— but these are difficult
things.

So little Sarah grew, till she could run
Upon the shore, and gambol at my side.
And often, when her mother was a-field,
I'd find her all alone, but well content,
As trusted now to "keep the house," yet free,
At my proposal, to relax her care,
And scurry on the sand, and see my dog
Rush open-mouthed upon the waves, and bark,
And bark again—she loved to hear him bark.

And Sarah grew, and was no more a babe,
But a great girl. Then more conspicuous seemed
Poor Bella's taste fantastic—certainly,
Fantastic—that was it—a string of beads,
Wreathed cunningly, a bow, a belt, the hair—

The everything so different, and then
The subtler difference that lay behind.
And she wore shoes the daintiest that are made,
And stockings—violet, or, haply, pink,
Or blue—whereas our children here go barefoot.
And this gave much offence: our farmers' wives
Were angry at these *capers*—that's their word—
These ways eccentric, alien, scandalous—
They said the child was like *a gipsy child;*
They said the child was like *a monkey perched*
Upon a barrel-organ in the street,
Or some wild changeling, *draggled through a fair*
To dance, and smirk, and shake the tambourine,
And grow to be a wanton—so they said.

But I, to whom the unfamiliar garb
Seemed not excessive, wedded, as it was,
To modesty, and scrupulous cleanliness—
I could not blame it; nay, it had a charm
For me, a charm of novelty and grace—
The break of dull monotony; as if
Some day among the gulls upon the beach
I should perceive a bird of paradise,
Or mark a fire-fly in the dusky bents.
Yet, when the little one was old enough
To come to school, and I had fixed the day,
And all was ready, I had many fears—
Indeed I all but asked to see her dressed
That morning, ere she left her mother's hand,
But did not venture: only, when she came,
I bade the mistress thoroughly examine
Each hem, and stitch, and gore, and plait, and seam,
And, if need be, abate, or modify.
Moreover I contrived to bring two friends,

Lady parishioners, mature in years,
Into the school that day; who, when they saw,
Approved, and were surprised: the child was dressed
Like other children, only wondrous neat—
Indeed, sir, I was thankful, recognising
The plastic spirit of my humble friend,
And how she caught the cue of circumstance.

So all was well, and Sarah grew apace,
And was an excellent scholar, apt and good.
And she had much of native dignity,
And calm control, well suited to abash
Our rougher lads: and, even before she left
The school, she looked so stately and so pure,
So sweetly tolerant, and yet so firm
Of principle, being resolute for good
Above all else, that evil things withdrew
From off her virgin path; and vulgar phrase,
And gesture loose, nor any wicked act,
Could e'er approach her—happy, happy such—
O sir, how happy! who, as in the sphere
Of their own crystal purity contained,
Are *naturally* safe, and, effortless,
Compel the baser elements—how few,
God knows. For is it not a weary strife
With most of us, our peace, if peace we have,
The fruit of mere exhaustion?—ah, God knows—
And God knows too—but 'tis a happier knowledge—
What preparation in the silent depths
Of these white, virginal souls is made, what conflict,
Perhaps, of other essences, to them
External, viewless powers, keeps beating back
The incursive ill, and still unbroken holds
That limited space wherein they walk secure—

So in the moving centre of a storm
There is a core of quiet, is there not?

In such a place as this, I need not say,
The children at our school cannot remain
Beyond the term prescribed by homely needs,
And exigence of labour. Sarah stayed
Up to her sixteenth year, a privilege
Not many of our working class obtain,
For her by Bella eagerly desired,
And jealously protected—and the girl
Made rapid progress, justifying all.
And, when she left, her mother would not take her
To work upon the fields, as she herself
Was wont, but sought a place of service for her
In Ramsey, with a family genteel,
Yet staid, and sober, which from Liverpool
Had come to spend the summer: and with them,
When they returned to Liverpool, she went,
To be their servant in that awful place.

But, ere she went, we had our Confirmation;
And Sarah came to be prepared by me:
And she impressed me much as one well girt
With Christian armour; and her frame of mind
Was excellent. Her answers, whether spoken,
Or written, such as I myself indeed
Would not have been ashamed of; and, in truth,
Her hand was always wonderfully clear.
So I was pleased: but Bella troubled me.

Her tendency to gauds broke out afresh
On this occasion, seeming to have died
As she grew old; or, possibly, her daughter
Had mitigated it, with exquisite tact,
Suggesting compromise, and ever holding

A mean, that had a pathos of its own,
So happily did she propitiate
Her mother's foible, subtly indistinct
In her distinction—as she managed it.
But now dear Bella hankered for a cap,
So frizzed, beribboned, done about with lace
And gauze, wherewith her daughter should appear
Before the Bishop, that I knew his lordship
Would be quite scandalised. Debate ran high
For quite a week between herself and me ;
And I was vexed. But Sarah made it right—
Yet not without some risk of public blame—
She wore no cap at all ; and never, sir,
Was Bishop's hand laid on a lovelier head.

So Sarah was confirmed, and went to England ;
And Bella had no doubts ; she knew her child.
Nor is there any tragedy behind
My simple story—ruin, sir, and death—
Thank God ! it was not thus, and could not be—
I say, *thank God!* for I have known of many
Caught in the snares of your great Liverpool,
Burned in the fire of your great Liverpool,
Cast forth like ashes on the unhallowed streets
Of your great Liverpool. An awful place
I said it was ; and so it is to us,
To us, sir, anxious for our children's good,
Our children's life. Oh yes ! I know there are
Good men in Liverpool, else Sodom's doom
Had fallen upon her long ago, who asks
The annual tribute of our shame—pollutes,
Devours—O God ! to think of it is death !

Good men in Liverpool—yes, sir, oh yes—
Undoubtedly—I know some clergymen

In Liverpool, who are most excellent,
Most admirable men in every way—
There's Mr.—— I forget his name—— his church
Is somewhere—— really I can't remember—
You see, your Liverpool is such a place,
Enormous, is it not? and most confusing.
You think I'm prejudiced—perhaps I am—
But you'll allow it is confusing, sir,
Confusing to a stay-at-home like me—
Well, well—I do not like your Liverpool.

But Sarah was not easily confused:
She could walk steadily where others swerve
And stagger from the track. Her feet were firm
And supple with the elasticity
Of innocence and maidenly resolve—
God giving her strength, God answering our prayers,
Refreshing her according to her need,
Nay, filling her with light; so that each year,
When she came back to see us, she was good,
And absolutely incorrupt as ever—
Unchanged indeed, save only that sweet change
Which comes of larger life, more copious flow
Of impulse ever chastened, broader space
Of soul, reflecting more variety
Of forms—as when a little mountain stream
Swims out into the figure of a lake,
And mirrors all the sky, and all the clouds.
Such change was added beauty, perfect joy,
And balance of a heart that knew no fear—
Sarah was fearless; that you saw at once—
Yet so affectionate, and simply kind.

It was a real little festival
When she came home to see us: every face

Was brighter for her look, such interest,
And such excitement, in the parish here!
For half a mile upon the Ramsey road
The people from the cottages came out,
And waited for the cart, the Parson's cart,
Which always brought her from the boat. Indeed
The first time that she came I did not care
To be among them: but the second time
I lingered at the corner of the lane;
And when they saw me, all, with one consent,
But tacitly, held back, as though they thought
It was for me to welcome her. And so
It came to be a custom of the place;
And I was always there, and nothing loth—
Such little things made up our round of life,
And are the landmarks of its quiet course;
And are not very little, after all,
For those who value simple loyalty,
And have respect for unpretending worth.

It was a pleasant and a happy scene:
But most 'twas happy, most 'twas pleasant, sir—
To me at least 'twas most—to see how Bella,
From mid-day till the twilight brought her hope,
Upon a sandhill, which advanced to meet
The road, sat spotless in the mere perfection
Of cap and kerchief, conscious of her hearth
Clean swept, and all the cottage bright as glass.
And so for hours she sat, most patiently
Knitting: and, now and then, some one would come—
Most frequently myself—and change a word
Of cheer, and in the very quiet of her tone
Divine the gathered loneliness, that now
Expected recompense, as justly due

To all those wintry longings in the night.
But when the sunset came, and that great joy
Was imminent, then Bella's needles clicked
Irregular, and from her trembling hands
Slipped devious, and her face was fixed upon
The long white road, and from her eyes dropped tears.
Then came the cart; and on my aiding hand
Sarah leaped light, but Bella waited still:
And we went up to her. So, every year,
It grew to be a custom, as I said,
A ritual of observance most exact,
Which changed, the people would have been amazed.

A Sabbath time for Bella, be assured—
A blessed, blessed time! and Sarah brought
Such presents for the children all about
That everywhere the little ones rejoiced,
And followed her. But chiefest bliss to me
Was in the evening, when the day was fine,
That sacred week, for well it might be called so,
While Sarah stayed with us, to see them walk,
The mother and her child, upon the shore,
At distance I, yet near enough to note
The close embrace of interwoven arms,
Slow step harmonious, stately forms erect,
Yet flowing in accordant tenderness—
Tall women both, yet Bella was less tall
Than Sarah, grown to perfect womanhood.

Nine years had passed, and still our Sarah served
In the same house. But, when the tenth year came,
Came news that Sarah was to be a wife
Before she saw us next—a man well off,
Intelligent, respectable, who loved her,
And whom she loved—you know the sort of man—

Connected with some—oh, a worthy man—
Should be her husband; and from marriage bells
Forthwith they twain would cross the sea, and make
Some stay with us—so Sarah's letter said.
But Bella, whatsoe'er she felt, was silent:
Only I thought I saw a heavy look—
And yet perhaps I did her wrong; for how
Could prospect of so great a change not throw
A shadow on her life? which having passed,
Bright sunshine would succeed. A mother's heart—
'Tis a great mystery, sir, a mother's heart.

And now the day approached that they should come;
And Bella seemed as if an inward strife
Had ended, and her soul was left in peace:
And she addressed her to the patent needs
Of service, and all hospitable cares.
And, when they came, I could not but rejoice
To mark how radiant Sarah looked, to see
Her husband too, a handsome man, well-grown,
Well-set; kind, honest face, and honest speech,
Where haply failed an aitch, as reason would
But nothing failed of modesty and truth:
Content, I grasped his hand.
Then Bella asked
If, that one night, in her old cottage home,
She might have Sarah to herself—"You were
My architect," she said to me, "you know
How far accommodation serves." Whereat
Her husband not surprised, we speedily
Arranged that he should at the Vicarage
Be entertained, my guest. We supped with her,
Then left them. 'Twas a pleasant night of stars,
And murmuring ripples, and sweet drowsy winds,

That scarcely stirred a leaf. And I was glad
To make the acquaintance of our Sarah's husband.
And as we walked and walked: and I could see
That he was *most* intelligent,—acquainted
With much that lay beyond my beat—the arts
Of busy life, and ways of toiling men,
And springs of wealth and industry—
We walked,
And still the light was in the window, still
They did not sleep, and it was getting late.
Then he to me—"I will draw near, and know
What holds them watching": to the window stept,
And looked a while, then beckoned me approach,
But silently; and I approached. Then he—
"Dear sir, you are a clergyman. In God's name
I bid you see the sight that I have seen."

Then through the opening of the narrow pane
I gazed, and saw how Bella had undressed
Her child, as long ago, when she and I
Had prayed beside the little one. But now
It was the absolute omnipotence
Of woman's beauty given to my view,
As in some wondrous dream: for Bella knelt,
And clasped the marble of her daughter's knees,
And kissed the softness of her daughter's breast,
And drank the music of her daughter's voice,
And seemed to take assurance of each sense
That this dear child, thus come to full estate
Of bodily form, was her own little one,
Flesh of her flesh, the same that she had borne
And nursed in sorrow, now complete in joy.

Oh *physically*, sir, it was supreme—
This Sibyl clinging to this Venus. Nay,

You'll pardon my poor fancy—classical,
Perhaps—but that is not the point—those faces,
Those faces, sir—that worship, and that smile—
Love! if this was not love, then where is love?
The love, the smile, the face, sir—either face—
Both faces in an ecstasy of love.
"Nursing the baby"—so I said to him,
Who yet again would look, and look again:
But came with me at last; and, reft of speech,
And in our hearts the murmuring of deep awe,
We sought the Vicarage; and, ere we slept,
I prayed for all.
Next morning, when I rose,
I found him up, and ready to descend
To Bella's cottage. At the opened door
Stood Sarah, very quiet. In her eyes
Methought I saw a trouble; but she spoke
Her greeting with a voice that seemed unmoved:
Then bade us enter. Which when we had done,
She gently turned the coverlet; and there
Lay Bella, with a sunbeam on her brow,
A bright young sunbeam—Bella, sir, was dead.

Of course, the doctors called it heart-disease—
But who can tell? God took her to Himself;
He knows the time—— But I neglect my function—
Westward to Jurby, eastward, as I said,
The coast runs level to the Point of Ayre.

IV. DRAMATIC LYRICS

(ANGLO-MANX)

IN THE COACH

No. I.—Jus' the Shy

YES, comin' home from the North Sea fishin' we were, past John o' Grotes,
Past the Pentlands and Cape Wrath theer, twenty boats
There'd be of us, and eight men and boys to every one, and how many are you making that?
A hunderd-and-sixty, says you—You're smart though, what?
And sure enough it is—aw this ciphrin' and figgurin' and recknin', aw grand! grand!
Well, when we hauled to the southward, the wind turned a foul, you'll understand;
So we made for a bay though, the lot of us: ter'ble narra it was to get in—
That bay—but spreadin' out astonishin',
And the room you navar seen—acres! acres! So swings to an anchor for all
As aisy as aisy, and plenty to spare, just that we could call
The time o' day and that: it's comfible, you know, like yandhar, and mayve a matthar
Of ten fathom—good houldin', fuss-rate ridin', couldn' be batthar.

And at the top of the bay there was a castle, ter'ble though,
Aw, bless ye, ter'ble uncommon, and the gardens theer all in a row,
And all above one another; and some guns that was took from the Rooshians, and a tower, and a flag goin' a-haulin'—
I don' know the burgee, but as broad as a good tarpaulin;
And over the door, cut to a dot, aw, open your eyes the widest you can!
Over the door, if you plaze, over the door, what next? God bless us! the three legs of Man!
That was the thing. My gough! the wondher we had;
And this and that; but at last Billy Fargher said
It muss ha' been some of these ould Earls or Dukes, or their daughters, or their nieces, or their cousins
(Of coorse, there'd be dozens)
That got married on yandhar lek—
At laste you'd expeck
There'd be some workin' in and out; and blood is blood,
That's aisy understood;
And navar ashamed of the ould flag, not her; but heisin'[1] it to the wind, and carvin' it on the stone, like defyin',
Lek as bould as a lion.
Now there was a ter'ble great lady livin' in this Castle, mind!
Aye, a lady, bless ye! and no mistake, grand, no doubt, but kind.
And she come to see us, aye, and she said she was once on the Islan',

[1] Hoisting.

And the people was that good to her, and that civil, and that smilin',
And that plazzant, she said, *that she couldn' forget it*, she said,
No, she said; *and it wasn' no use*, she said,
They were nice people, she said, *the nice you couldn' tell;*
That's what she said, and she liked them well.
And she wouldn' take no res' of us but we muss promise then and theer
To have dinner with her, aye! dinner, think of that now! a hunderd-and-sixty of us—what? aw, I'll sweer.
Dinner though; so promised sure enough; and the day come,
And there wasn' a sowl of us went, not a sowl, by gum!
No! and the pipers blawin',
And the curks[1] drawin',
And the preparation they'd be havin', so I'm toul',
And there wasn' a sowl, no, not a sowl.
And what for was that? What for? Just the shy, the shy,
That's the what for, and that's the why,
And that's the way with the Manx; aw, it is though, aw, they are, they are,
Mos' despard shy; aw, it's a pity for all, but star'
They will, and wink and nudge and poke and bother,
And spit theer and laugh, and look like axin' one another—
"Are you goin', and you?" and takin' rises, and all to that,
Till you can't tell is it your granny's cat
Or what is it that's doin' on you, but you feel jus' a reg'lar fool,

[1] Corks.

And all the time bitendin'[1] to be as cool as cool.
Aw dear! it's a pity! a pity! aw, a rum lot!
But, whether or not,
The great lady was agate of us again,
'Deed for sure she was, and she seen the men
Was shy of the dinner; but it's lek[2] she thought
It was on account of not knowin' how to behave
theerselves the way they ought
With theer knives and theer plates and the lek; so
axed them to tay—
Aw, she muss ha' been a kind lady anyway!
And we promised faithful, and the day come, and she
sent and she sent,
And there wasn' a one of us went.
The shy, did ye say? Sartinly, nothin' but the shy,
That's the way we are; aye,
Treminjus though. I was raelly sorry for her, I was,
I tell ye,
And all the throuble that was at her theer, fit for a
melya,[3]
And the disappointed—what? and, altogather, my
chiarn![4]
These Manx chaps isn' fit, no they ar'n'—
Ter'ble boghs![5]
Well, the wind veered round, and we all sailed
for the southward,
Excep' two boats. Now, d'ye think she'd ha'
bothered
About such dunkies? Well, that's jus' what she did,
Perseverin', aye! and considherin', and waitin'.
"Turn your quid!"
Says Juan Jem, lek *futhee*, lek *no hurry!* you know
Lek *aisy all!* lek *keep her so!*

[1] Pretending. [2] Like, likely. [3] Harvest-home.
[4] Lord! [5] Poor creatures.

Lek *wait and see!* Patient, is it? But anyway the strong
The kindness was in her—that's it, and the long-
Suff'rin' lek, and navar not no capers of takin' offince.
My gough! it's many a time I've thought of it since.
What did she do but down to these chaps that was lavin'[1] behind—
Sixteen of them, aye—and axed them theer as kind as kind—
To tay? most sartin; what else? and I tell ye they took heart and went,
And enjoyed theerselves to the full the same's it might be you or any other gent.
But the res'? you're wond'rin'. Chut!
Jus' the shy, and nothin' *but*
The shy. Aw, no use a' talkin',
The shy it's shawkin'.
No raison, says you: not a bit.
Amazin', says you. Well, that's all you'll get,
That is the raison, and the for and the why—
Jus' the shy!

No. II.—Yes, Ma'am! No, Ma'am!

Yes, ma'am, no, ma'am;
We called him Joe, ma'am;
Eighteen—
My name's Cregeen—
Yes, ma'am, no, ma'am;
Had to go, ma'am
Faver? aye;
Young to die;
Eighteen for spring.
(*Chorus of sympathisers*) "Poor thing! poor thing!"

[1] Was leaving: were left.

Yes, ma'am, no, ma'am ;
I'm rather low, ma'am—
Bombay—
Not at say.
Yes, ma'am, no, ma'am ;
Just so, ma'am,
Clane groun',
And the Pazon in his gown ;
No stone, just marks.
(*Chorus as before*) "She's thinkin' of these sharks."

Yes, ma'am, no, ma'am,
Not like home, ma'am—
The clothes he died in
The corp was plied in.
Yes, ma'am, no, ma'am ;
But just to sew, ma'am,
Something sof',
Plazed enough,
But couldn' be—
(*Chorus as before*) "My chree ! my chree !" [1]

Yes, ma'am, no, ma'am,
We were callin' him Joe, ma'am—
His chiss [2] come,
Not like to some ;
Yes, ma'am, no, ma'am,
Come by Crow, ma'am,
From Liverpool :
And, of a rule,
Not amiss.
(*Chorus as before*) "She's got his chiss ! she's got his chiss !"

[1] Dear Heart ! [2] Chest.

Yes, ma'am, no, ma'am,
These feerns [1] will grow, ma'am,
So I'm tould.
But I'm makin' very bould.
Yes, ma'am, no, ma'am—
Rather slow, ma'am,
Is this coach ;
But I hope I don't encroach—
In my head the pain 's.
(*Chorus as before*) "In her heart she manes."

Yes, ma'am, no, ma'am.

No. III.—Conjergal Rights

Conjergal rights ! conjergal rights !
I don't care for the jink of her and I don't care for the jaw of her,
But I'll have the law of her.
Conjergal rights ! yis, yis, I know what I'm sayin'
Fuss-rate, Misthress Corkhill, fuss-rate, Misther Cain,
And all the people in the coach—is there a man or a woman of the lot of ye—
Well now, that's what I wudn' have thought of ye,
I wudn' raelly—No, I *haven' got a little sup*,
Not me—is there one of ye that wudn' stand up
For conjergal rights ?
No, ma'am, *tight*'s
Not the word, not a drop since yesterday. But lizzen, good people, lizzen !
I'll have her in the coorts, I'll have her in prison—
It's the most scandalous thing you ever—What ! this woman and her daughter—
It's clane murder, it's abslit manslaughter,

[1] Ferns.

Aye, and I wudn' trus' but beggamy, that's what it is—Married yesterday mornin'
In Kirk Breddhan Church, and not the smallest taste of warnin',
Takes her to her house in Castletown,
And jus' for I axed a quashtin [1]—and I'll be boun'
It's a quashtin any one of you wud have axed—picks a quarrel, makes a row,
The two of them, aye, the two of them—bow-wow!
Hammer and tungs! [2] sends for a pleeceman, puts me to the door—
But I'll owe her! I'll owe her!
Aisy, Mr. Cretney? No, I'll not be aisy;
It's enough to make a body crazy,
That's what it is, and the supper on the table,
And the hoss in the stable.
And I said nothin', nor I done nothin'. Aw, if there's law in the land,
Law or justice, I'll have it, d'ye understand?
Do ye see the thing? My grayshus! married is married,
Isn' it? what? and me that carried
The woman's box. And that isn' all; what raison? what sense?
Think of the expense! think of the expense!
Don't ye know? God bless me! The certif'cake, that's hafe-a-crown,
And the licence, that's five shillin', money down, money down!
And not a farlin' off for cash, these Pazons, not a farlin';
And said she was my darlin'
And all to that, guy heng! [3] it's thrue! it's thrue!
And look at me now! boo-hoo-oo-oo!

[1] Question. [2] Tongs. [3] Go hang!

Yis, cryin' I am, and no wondher—
You don't see me it's that dark in the coach. By the livin' thundher
I'm kilt mos'ly, that's what I am, almos' kilt
With throuble and disthress and all. *A jilt,*
You say, *a jilt?* But married, married, married, d'ye hear?
Married, Misthress Creer,
Married afore twelve at Kirk Breddhan,
Married, a reg'lar proper weddin'
And no mistake,
And this woman . . . O my gough! don't spake of her! don't spake!
It's me that's spakin'? Yis, and I will! I will!
Who's to spake if I amn'? But still—
It's lek you don't see, the coach is so dark, and no light from these houses,
But feel of this new coat, and the pair of new trousis,
Bought o' puppose,[1] o' puppose! what else?
Bran new; and the shirt and the frells,
And the cuffs and the collar, every d—— thing
As bran and as new as a gull's wing—
And all to plaze her, and to look accordin'
To the occasion, and to do her credit, and ho'rdin'
The teens of months. And O, if I'd only borrowed them from a neighbour!
That's the thing, but bought them, bought them! and even so they might ha' been chaber,[2]
Yis, they might, at another shop. But you don' see the way I'm goin',
No, no, you don'—
But I'd lek you to—the tears! I'm jus' slushin' the sthraw

[1] On purpose. [2] Cheaper.

With the tears, makin' the coach all damp for the people—yis, I know I am, but I'll have the law, I'll have the law.
Just a quashtin about a bit of proppity,
The house, in fac', the very house we come into, d'ye see?
The house, her house! Of coorse! of coorse! But goodness grayshurs!
Who doesn' know the law about a thing like that? the iggorant! the ordashurs!
If ever there was a thing on God's earth
That was mine, it was yandhar house! But it isn' worth
Talkin'—no! There's people that'll go against anything. But what! no suttlement goin' a-makin',[1]
Nor nothin', jus' everything goin' a-takin'
Undher the common law of matrimony theer—
At my massy![2] at my massy! With your lave, Mr. Tear,
At my massy, sir. You'll 'scuse me.
But you know the law. Married—my chree! my chree!
What *iss* "married," if that isn'? it's as plain as a dus'bin—
Your own dear lovin' husbin'
As kind as kind!
See the beauty of it! And "all that's thine is mine,"
Isn' it sayin' that in the Bible?
And surely the woman is li'ble
As well as the man; and to "love, honour, and obey,"
Isn' that what they say?
But it's my heart, that's it! my poor broken heart! aw dear! aw dear!

[1] Settlement to be made. [2] Mercy.

And my feelin's! my feelin's! and that son of mine
girnin' from ear to ear,
And his lip, and his imprince, and his disrespeck,
And the waste and the neglec'—
O, it's awful! it's awful! O, the wounds that there's
no healin's!
O, my feelin's! my feelin's!
But I'll see aburt,[1] I will, I'll see aburt—
The dirt!
The wife of my bosom! Don't be mockin'!
I heard a woman laughing: its shockin'
That a woman 'd laugh at the lek of such doin's, yis,
it is,
Downright wickedness—
A woman that I could name—
Fie for shame! fie for shame!
But I'll have law. Look here! Is James Gell a
lawyer? You'll hardly uphould me
He isn', will ye? James Gell—the Attorney-Gineral:
well, that's the man that tould me.
*Did I spake to him about it? was I axin' him afore
I was anything to her?*
Sartinly! my gough! was I goin' to run my neck
into a noose,
And navar no 'pinion nor . . . I'm not such a goose
As yandhar ither, I've gorrit[2] in writin', yis, I have,
I've gorrit here — aw, you'll get lave! you'll get
lave!
Not aisy to read, but God bless me! where's my
specs? But lar't! lar't![3]
It's my feelin's: O, my heart! my heart!
My poor heart! my poor heart! boo-hoo-oo-oo! Aye,
and you'd think there'd be
Some semperthy,

[1] About it. [2] Got it. [3] Let it be.

Some . . . Crow, open this door and let me out!
there's no regard with ye
For a man's . . . I'll not ride another yard with ye . . .
Theer then! theer! No, I'll have none of your
good-nights . . .
Conjergal rights! conjergal rights!

No. IV.—Going to Meet Him

A. Yes, yes, I'll be seein' him, seein' Billy
This very night—aw, I'm almost silly
With the thought. Yes, Mrs. Quayle, just a year
away,
And he's comin' home this very day.
Billy! Billy! aw, the foolish I am!
And you'll 'scuse me, ladies, won't ye now? Aw, I'll
be as qui't as a lamb,
Yes, I will: and it isn' right
To be carryin' on like this afore people, but aw, the
delight!
O! I wonder how he'll be lookin'; he's that handsome
and gud,
Aw yes, aw dear! I wud, I wud,
I wud fly, I wud die! O the darling! O! it's shockin',
And I can't keep qui't, no, I can't, no, I can't, and
it's no use o' talkin'.
But I'll try, Mrs. Quayle, you know me; yes, I'll try,
I'll do my best,
O! I will though, and only proper lek. But how'l
he be drest?
O Billy, Billy! will he have his white ducks? ho, ho!
It's me that 'd make them like the driven snow;
But these Liverpool washerwomen—chut! the nasty
things! aw, I'll be bail

No notion whatever, no, they haven' ; what did ye say, Mrs. Quayle ?
Not to be expectin' too much and I'll not be disappointed? and *I'd batthar*—
What, Mrs. Quayle, *batthar* what, what ? what ? I've got the latthar !
He's comin' ! he's comin' ! "On the spree," did ye say ?
Like the way
With such, Mrs. Quayle ? With such !
Mrs. Quayle ! Mrs. Quayle ! Who then ? whuch ?
This coach is chokin' me, give me air—
No, no ! it isn' fair,
Navar ! no, navar ! navar !
No, no ! you're clavar,
You've seen a dale,
Mrs. Quayle,
A dale, no doubt, but that you'll navar see,
For I love Billy, and Billy loves me !
Is that plain ? don't you know that ? It cudn' ! it cudn' !
But ye come upon me that sudden.
No, no ! that's not Billy, nor natur', nor nothin' ; that's foolishness—
But I can't rest—
This coach is close—the hot I am and the coul' !
(*Chorus of conscious women*) "Poor sowl ! poor sowl !"

B. Now then, now then, what do you say now ?
Here he is, and I think you'll allow
Eh, Mrs. Quayle, you'll allow, I think,
Not the smallest sign of drink.
And I ast your pardon humble I do—
I'm forgettin' myself. But is it you ?

Is it you? is it you? Whisper then,
The *millish ven!*[1]
Close, Billy, close—
God knows
I love you, Billy, and you love me,
Don't you, Billy? my chree! my chree!
Aw, just to hear—
Chut! I'm foolish, but O, the dear!
The—*Steady*, did ye say? yis, Billy, yis!
Steady it is.
Now, Mrs. Quayle, is he drunk or sober?
Poor ould Billy! And last October
He sailed, poor chap! And *it's me that's drunk*—
With joy you mane? And have you got your trunk—
What am I talkin'? your chiss—dear me! and didn'
I see't
Comin' along the street—
Of coorse, and mended—
You tould me. O! isn' all this beautiful? isn' it
splendid?
Closer, Billy, closer then!
Crid shen?[2]
Nothin', but . . . lizzen, Billy, whisp'rin's free—
I love Billy, and he loves me . . .
Do you, Billy? as God's above,
Do you love
Me, Billy? The word, Billy, as soft as soft—
What am I thinkin' of?
Aw, ye said it, ye said it. And now I'll trouble ye
Is he drunk or sober, this young man, W.
Sayle, by name? Aw, you'll 'scuse me, won't ye?
Aw I didn' mane to 'front ye,
Aw nothin' of the surt! Only, ye see, the glad
I am it's fit to drive me mad.

[1] Sweet dear. [2] What's that?

And I'm rather young . . . at laste, not that oul',
You'll 'scuse me, won't ye . . .
(*Chorus of conscious women*) "Poor sowl! poor sowl!"

No. V.—The Pazons

What's the gud of these Pazons? They're the most despard rubbage go'n',
Reg'lar humbugs they are. Show me a Pazon, show me a drone!
Livin' on the fat of the land, livin' on the people's money
The same 's the drones is livin' on the beeses honey.
Aw bless ye! the use of them? not the smallest taste in the world, no!
Grindin' down the honest workin' man, just so;
Suckin' the blood of the poor and needy,
And as greedy's greedy.
See the tithes, see the fees, see the glebes and all;
What's the call
For the lek? and their wives go'n' a takin' for ladies, and their childhar go'n' sendin' to College
Like the fuss[1] of the land. Aw, it bates all knowledge
The uprisement of the lek! And fingerin' with their piannas,
Them that shud be singin' their hosannahs
To the King of glory constant. Clap them in the pulfit theer,
What can they do! Aw, come down the steer![2] come down the steer,
And don't be disgracin' yourself that way! That's what I've been thinkin' many a time—

[1] First. [2] Stair.

And let a praecher take his turn, a local, aye, just try 'm!
Aw, give your people a chance to get salvation.
"Blow ye the trumpet in Zion!" That's the style, and the prespiration
Pourin' out all over his body! See the wrestlin',
And the poor Pazon with his collec' and his pestlin'
And his gosp'lin'. *Gospel!* Let it sound abroad,
The rael gospel of God!
Aw then the happy I am!
Give us the Lamb! give us the Lamb!
But he can't, I tell ye, he can't—
What's that young man sayin' theer—rant?
Rant indeed, is that what he's learnin'
At Oxfoot College, to revile the spirit that's burnin'
In the hearts of the faithful? Aye, and let it burn, let it blaze!
But here's the Pazon, if ye plaze,
Cocked up with his little twinkle of a farlin' rush,
And 'll hauk and blush,
And his snips and his snaps
And his scrips and his scraps,
And endin' up with the Lord's Prayer quite sudden
Lek the ould woman's sauce to give a notion of a puddin', . . .
Aye, puddin', and drabbin' with their swishups and dishups
Of the stale ould broth of the law! If all the hands of all the bishops
Was goin' crookin' over his head, he wudn' be a praecher,
Not him, *nor* a taecher.
You can't be married without a Pazon? Can't I though?
Can't I, Masther Crow?

Give me the chance: I'm a married man with a fam'ly comin',
But if it plazed the Lord to take Mrs. Creer, d'ye think there's a woman
'd refuse to go with me before the High Bailiff down At Castletown,
And ger' a slick of matrimony put upon us?
Honest?
Yes, honest thallure:[1] *but holy*, "*holy matrimony*," *they're say'n'*—
Holy your grandmother!—At laste, I mane,
And astin' your pardon, Mrs. Clague!
But the idikkilis people is about the lek o' yandhar—Aisy with your leg,
Masthar Callow; thank ye! that'll do—
Yis, Mrs. Clague, and crizzenin's and funarls too—
Shuperstition, just shuperstition, the whole kit,
Most horrid, just popery, clane popery, that's it—
Aye, popery and schamin' and a lie and a delusion and snares
To get money out of the people, which is the Lord's and not theirs!
Money, money every turn,
Money, money—pay or burn!
And where does it come from? I said it before, and I say it again,
Out of the sweat of the workin' man,
Aw these priests! these priests! these priests—
Down with them, I say. The brute beasts
Has more sense till us, that's willin' to pay blackmail
To a set of rascals, to a pack of——Good evenin', Pazon Gale!
Good evenin', sir, good evenin'! Step up, sir! Make room,

[1] Enough.

Make room for our respected Vicar—And may I
persume
To ax how is Mrs. Gale, sir, and the family?
Does this weather agree—
Rather damp, I dessay! And the Governor's got
knighted?
I'm delighted to see you, sir, delighted, delighted!

No. VI.—Noah's Ark

(*On the road*)
"Good gracious! what in the world is this?"—"A
lil cauf, ma'am."
"Why, you don't mean to say . . .?"—"I'll take it
by the scruff, ma'am;
We'll just lave it at the door.
It's belongin' to Mr. Moore."
"And to think the abominable brute
Was sucking at my boot!
Mr. Crow! Mr. Crow!
I'd have you to know . . ."
"Jus' a lil cauf, ma'am,
Jus' a lil cauf."
(*Arrival at Ramsey*)
"Mercy on us! what next?"—"A lil dunkey, ma'am."
"A little what? Good heavens!"—"Aw, ye needn'
be funky, ma'am;
I'll get him out as qui't . . .
Good people, bring a light!"
"But a solitary female in the dark . . .
With half the beasts in Noah's ark.
Mr. Crow! Mr. Crow!
I'd have you to know . . ."
"Jus' a lil dunkey, ma'am,
Jus' a lil dunkey."

MATER DOLOROSA

Aw, Billy, good sowl! don't cuss! don't cuss!
Ye see, these angels is grand to nuss;
And it's lek they're feedin' them on some nice air,
Or dew or the lek, that's handy there,
O Billy, look at my poor poor bress!
O Billy, see the full it is!
But . . . O my God! . . . but navar mind!
There's no doubt them sperrits is very kind—
And of coorse they're that beautiful it's lekly
The childher is takin to them directly—
Eh, Billy, eh? . . . And . . . O my head!
Billy, Billy, come to bed! . . .
And the little things that navar knew sin—
And everything as nate as a pin:
And the lovely bells goin' ding-a-lingin'—
And of coorse we've allis heard of their singin'.
But won't he want me when he'll be wakin'?
Will they take him up when he's wantin' takin'?
I hope he'll not be left in the dark—
He was allis used to make a wark
If a body 'd lave him the smallest minute—
Dear me! the little linnet—
But I forgot—it's allis light
In yandhar place . . . All right! all right!
I forgot, ye see, . . . I'm not very well . . .
Light, was I sayin'? but who can tell?
Bad for the eyes, though . . . but a little curtain
On a string, ye know—aw certain! certain!
Let me feel your face, Billy! Jus' us two!
Aw, Billy, the sorry I am for you!
Aw 'deed it is, Billy,—very disthressin'

To lave your childher to another pessin—
But . . . all the little rooms that's theer—
And Jesus walkin' up the steer,
And tappin' lek—I see! I see!—
O Jesus Christ, have pity on me!
But He'll come, He'll come! He'll give a look
Jus' to see the care that's took—
O! there's no doubt He's very gud—
O, I think He wud, I think He wud!
But still . . . but still . . . but I don't know . . .
O Billy! I think I'd like to go—
What's that, Billy? did ye hear a cry?
O Illiam, the sweet it'd be to die!

THE CHRISTENING

HOULD him up!
Hould him up!
Joy! joy!
Hould him up! hould him up!
Is that the boy?
Hould him up!

Stand out of the way, women,
Stand out of the way!
Here, Misthress Shimmin!
Here, I say!
Here! here!
Aw dear!
Is this him?
Every limb
Taut and trim—

Here's a hull!
Here's a breast—
Like a bull!
He's got my finger in his fess[1]—
He hess![2] he hess!

Look at the grip!
Is that a smile upon his lip?
He can't do that!
What! what!
Smile!
My gough! what a chile!

Feel the gristle!
Feel it though!
Stop! I'll whistle—
Whew——! bo!
What's he doin'?
Is it cooin'
You call it when he goes like yandhar?
See his eyes the way they wandhar!
Hullo! hullo!
Where'll you go? where'll you go?
Keep her so!

There's a look!
There's another!
The little rook!
What's he wantin'
With this gallivantin'?
Ah! the mother! ah! the mother!
Yiss! yiss! muss hev a kiss!
Aw, Kitty, Kitty bogh![3]
Aw my gough!

[1] Fist. [2] Has. [3] Poor Kitty.

Kitty darlin'! Kitty then!
And me so far away!
The hard it muss ha' ben![1]
Were you freckened,[2] Kitty, eh?
Navar mind!
Here I am!
As consigned!
And, axin' your pardon, Misthress Shimmin, ma'am,
Here's the joy!
Here's our boy, Kitty!
Here's our boy!

Listen! I'll tell you a thing—
By jing!
I've calkerlated it to a dot,
But whether or not—
The very night Kitty was tuk-
Just three days,
If you plaze,
Out of Dantzic, there was a sea struck—
Jemmy 'll remember—
Every timber
Shuck!

Close-hauled, you know, and I navar tould ye,
But behould ye!
In the trough there, rowlin' in it,
Just that minute—
I saw a baby, as plain,
Passin' by on a slant of rain
To leeward, and his little shiff[3]
Streamin' away in the long gray driff.

[1] Must have been. [2] Frightened. [3] Shift.

I saw him there—you didn' regard [1] me—
But his face was toward me—
Oughtn't I to know him?
Well, I saw him afore Kitty saw him!
I saw him, and there he ess,[2]
There upon his mother's breast,
The very same, I'll assure ye;
And I think that'll floor ye!
And his body all in a blaze of light—
A dirty night!
"Where was he goin'?"
Who's knowin'?
He was in a hurry in any case,
And the Baltic is a lonesome place—
But here he is, all right!
Here he is now! joy! joy!
God bless the boy!

Have you tould the Pazon? what did he say?
Has he seen him—ould Pazon Gale?
Aw, you tould the Pazon anyway!
Tould! he'll turn the scale
At thirty pound,
I'll be bound.

Did you put it in the papers?
No, no! What capers!
No, no!
Splendid though!
Upon my life—
Catharine, wife
Of Mounseer
Eddard Creer,

[1] See. [2] Is.

Esqueer,
Otherwise dadaa,
Of a son and heer!
Hip-hip-hip-hip, hooraa!

Bless my sowl! am I draemin'?
He'll make a seaman
Will yandhar lad—
Aw, the glad!
Yiss! yiss! Misthress Shimmin, certainly!
Go down to the smack,
Jemmy, and see—
Yiss! Misthress Shimmin
And all the rest of the women—
'Scuse me, ladies! rather 'cited—
Just the delighted, you know, the delighted!
And every raison to suppose
(See him cockin' his nose!)
That the best of care
And ceterar——
I'll get that with Misthress Shimmin—did ye say?
Eh?

Go, Jemmy, they're lyin' quite handy,
A bottle of rum and another of brandy,
In the starboard locker theer—
And, Jemmy! there's a taste of gin—
Aw, navar fear!
Tell the chaps to finish it—
All the kit—
And listen—tell ould Harper
We'll take and warp her
Inside
On the morning's tide—
About hafe-past four 'll be time to begin—
My gough! but we'll have a chrizzenin'!

PEGGY'S WEDDING

"Is that you, Peggy? my goodness me!
And so dark still I can hardly see!
Wait, woman, wait!
I'll come down: ye needn' go on hommerin' at such a rate.
Here's the master snorin'
Like a mill, and you to be breakin' the door in—
It's just disthractin', that's what it is—
Aisy, woman! yis! yis!—
There's people 'll snore—where's that perricut?[1]
There's people 'll hommer—my gough! that slut!
I'm comin'! I'm comin'!
God bless the woman!
I navar heard such a row——

"Aw dear! aw dear! aw, the craythur! aw, poor Peggy, what's the matter with you now?
Come in! come in! the sowl! the sowl!
What is it, Peggy, what? and where have you left Dan Cowle?
Is he outside in the street? -well, where is he then?
Did you call at the halfway-house? did he get -aw, bless these men!
Did he fall on the road? *No*, ye say, *no?*
Well then where did he go?
Is he lyin' in the ditch?
Did he lave you, or did you lave him—which?
You left *him?*
So I suppose it's not a man you're wantin' at all, but a cherubim?
Aye! aye!
Middlin' high!

[1] Petticoat.

"And you that were married only yesterday, and the weddin' out of this house—
To be comin' home in the mornin' all ragg'd and rumpled like a reg'lar trouse[1]—
Peggy, Peggy! *You'd like to blow the fire, just to feel*
You're at home again—eh, Peggy? Don't kneel! don't kneel!
Don't be foolish, Peggy. There! take the bellows,
And blow away!
And we'll have a cup o' tay,
And then you'll tell us.
Why—Dan Cowle! Dan Ballabroo!
A dacent man, and well-to-do!
Dan! Dan Cowle! dear heart!
And the beautiful ye went away in the cart!
And you've tuk and left him! left Dan!
Left the man!"

"*Man!* did ye say? aw Misthriss, Misthriss! what are ye talkin'?
Man! do ye call that craythur a man, because he's a thing that's walkin'
On two legs, and a tongue in his head? a beautiful surt[2]
Of a man—you call him a man, I call him a dirt!
That's what I call him—a dirt, and a sneak, and a dunkey—
Man! if that chap's a man, he's a cross 'twix a man and a monkey!
And a touch of a divil, and a touch of a fool . . .
Listen, Misthriss, listen! We warn' half-way up Barrule,

[1] Slattern. [2] Sort

When I thought he'd ha' stayed a bit—and only raisonable he shud—
At Kinvigs's—bein' a thing lek that's general understood—
What's halfway-houses for, I'd like to know—
Just so!
You wouldn' be agen[1] that?
What?

"Certainly! and company waitin'—and just a drop to warm a body—
And dear me! what is there in half a glass of rum, or a whole glass, for the matter of that, to harm a body?
And well you know it isn' the dhrink I regard—
Well you know that—but still a body's hardly prepar'd
To pass the only public-house on the road, drivin' home on your weddin' night—
It isn' right,
Nor correck, nor friendly, nor in any surt of a concatenation
Lek accordin' to your station—
And disappintin' people that way, when they're trustin'
Your proper feelin's, is quite disgustin'.

"So I lays my hand on his arm, just by way of signifyin'—
Nothin' more—and behould ye! he cocks hisself up as stiff and as dignifyin',
And rip! and rup! and chip! and chup!
And 'There's nobody up,' he says. Nobody up?
And glasses jinglin', and windows blazin',
And people comin' out, and shoutin' amazin'

[1] Against.

To stop! But no! but sticks his elbers like skewers
in a body—
'What!' I says, 'not a glass of toddy?
Just for neighbourly dacency?'
'It's surprisin' how early they're goin' to bed,' says
he.
'Goin' to bed!' says I. 'Yes,' he says—middlin'
snarly—
'Kinvigs's was allis early,' he says, 'partic'lar early'—
And his ould hoss gallopin', and heisin' his hind-
quarters, and workin'
Like a see-saw, and bumpin' and jerkin',
And sent me flyin', with my head in the bottom of
the cart, and my feet in the air,
And the rest of me—anywhere.

"So he puts out his hand—
'Bless my sowl!' he says, 'I thought it was gone!'
'What?' says I. 'The box,' he says, maenin' my
box, and my weddin' bonnet
Smashed to jammy—'I wish you'd sit upon it,'
He says—the box, of coorse! So I thought I'd be
a little lovin'
And that—and I comes up lek gradjal, lek shiftin'
and shovin'
Lek agen him in a way. And I says, 'I'd like to be
with you,' says I,
'My own husband,' I says; for I thought it better to
try
Was there just a taste
Of anything of a husband in him. So he put his
arm round my waist—
Not round either—for he couldn' do that—
Not for the stout I am, bein' allis a gintale figger,
but just like a lath—

Flat
Agen the back o' my stays, and not the smallest curl
Or squeeze in the ould pump-handle, not the smallest
in the worl'—
And his eyes on the box—and 'There it's goin'!'
He says, and waein' and woin'—
And as restless! And then we got on the mountain;
and the ling
Was smellin' very sweet in the dark, and a stream
began ting-ting-ting
Down the other way—very pleasant, and it got
couldher,
And I thought it was only a 'spectable thing to put
my head on his shouldher.

"O dear! he got as crabbit
As an ould buck rabbit;
And he hitched and he hunched, and he cribbed and
he crunched,
Till he was all bunched
In a lump; and anyway his blades that sharp
And snaggy you might as well ha' leaned your head
on the backbone of a carp.

"So I didn' care, and I sat up as straight
And as indepandin'. It was gettin' late
When we come to his house; and there was a falla
theer standin' on the look-out
On the very top of the midden, and jumps down, and
grips the hoss, and gives a big shout,
And 'Look here!' he says, 'who's goin' to pay me?'
'Pay!'
Thinks I—and this ould fool goin' seerchin' away
In all his pockets—and gev a start,
And 'Bless my heart!'

He says, 'hev I lost it? hev I lost it?' and twisses
and wriggles
Hisself into knots—and the other chap stands and
sniggles—
A young chap—And 'Dear me!' says Dan, 'it must
ha' dropt out on the road comin'—
It's very disthressin',' he says. 'Faith then! you're
a rummin,'
Says the chap, and like to buss[1]—
'What's the use o' talkin'?' says Dan Cowle, 'I've
lost my puss.
Where's your puss, Peggy? maybe,' he says, 'you'll
not mind
Payin' the man,' he says—'if you'll be so kind,'
He says—but oh! that creepin', and that sneakin',
and that slewin', and that screwin',
Like a conger just. And 'What's a doin'?'
Says I; 'isn' it your own cart you got?'
'Well—— no—— it's not,'
He says, 'I must confess—
The fact of the matter is,' he says,
'My own cart is bruk very bad,
And I borrowed this one for the occasion.' So I
paid the lad.

"'Aye, aye! his cart is bruk very bad,' says the
chap,
'Likewise his trap,
And the phaeton, and the barooch, and the jantin'-
car, and the family coach-and-four'—
And he gev a roor
Out of hisself, this young divil—
And 'Hurrah for the weddiners!' he says. 'Be civil!
be civil!'

[1] Burst.

Says Dan, 'be civil, young man, it would well become ye'—
But says I—'Take your money and your cart,' I says, 'and be off with ye, ye scum ye!
Be off!' I says, 'stir your stumps!'
(These Foxdale lumps [1]
Is pirriful.[2]) And Dan with the box on the street, and pokin'
The key in the door—and, you know, I seen the chimbley wasn' smokin',
Nor nothin'—nor no cowhouse about that I could see,
Nor no garden, nor a bush, let alone a tree—
But just a crock
Standin' on a rock,
And water runnin' in it very free
At the gable, and slishin' and slushin', and muckin' the street
Under one's feet.

"And this is the man that tould me he'd make me
So comfible!
But still
You'll not mistake me,
You know me, Misthriss, don't ye? and you know I wouldn' flinch,
No, not even if I was deceived—no, not an inch!
On I'd go, through the smooth and the rough,
Content enough—
For richer for poorer, for better for wuss—
Lost his puss!
Had he? lost two! lost twenty!
Give me a man with a lovin' heart, Misthriss, with a lovin' heart—
That's plenty—

[1] Lads. [2] Pitiful, detestable.

Plenty for me—navar mind the cart—
With a lovin' heart, and some wit about him -
And I'd navar doubt him,
Misthriss—no! *For better for wuss*—
Them's the words, and didn' the Pazon say them?
And I'd nuss
His childher, and I'd work, and I'd slave, and I'd die
Before I'd be beat—and still a lie
Is a dirty thing—fore or aft,
As the sailors is sayin'—
But listen again—
Misthriss! Misthriss! you don't know half.

"So we got in, however, and he groped about, and
he found a flint-and-steel,
And he skinned his ould knuckles all like a priddha[1]
peel,
Streck-streckin' away; and, when he gor[2] a light at
last,
You navar seen such a rookery. A dresser there
was—
Yis—but hardly a plate or a bason, or any other surt
o' war',
And a hape of mouldy turmits[3] in a corner there—
could, comfortless things they are—
And a rot-hole,[4] or a shot-hole, I don't know which,
and I don't care etha',[5]
And a barrel that looked like male, with a flag or a
slate on the top of it, and a medha,[6]
And a pot, and nothin' in it, and no fire, if there had
been, and as for bed or beddin'—
Well, I dedn' throuble, no, faith, I dedn'.

[1] Potato. [2] Got. [3] Turnips. [4] Rat-hole.
[5] Either. [6] Small, one-handled tub.

"It was a house that if you were inside you'd see
about as much sky as roof,
A surt o' mixthar o' the two, and a touch of harry-
long-legses and spiders—aw, it's the troof![1]
it's the troof,
The troof I'm tellin'! And the scraas[2] hangin' in
rags and strings of dirt as black
You couldn' tell were they scraas, or strips tore from
a rotten ould sack,
Or nettin' or somethin'. And I can tell ye the chap
begun, as a body might say,
To look rather ashamed of hisself—I think so—in a
way—
Yis—he didn' look at me for a bit at all,
But cocked his face agen the wall.

"And—'It's too late,' he says, 'it's too late for
supper, I suppose'—
And ye might have sniffed and sniffed till ye straint
your nose
Afore you'd ha' got a smell of supper in yandhar place—
But he turned at last, and I saw his face—
Workin', workin', workin' most terrible,
And screwin' the eye, and workin' still—
And—'Let's sit down a bit,' he says, and he studdied
the candle, if ye plaze, and he looks up as
innocent as a linnet,
And he says, 'That's a nice puss you've got,' he says;
'how much is there in it?'
And I tould him £4 : 16s. and 2½d. farlin'—
So he says, 'That's a nice little bit o' money, my
darlin'—
Let's see it,' he says.

[1] Truth.

[2] Strips of sod laid on the rafters under the thatch.

So I gev it to him, ye know ;
And he counted it out, I tell ye, every coin of it, very slow—
Very slow he counted—and then—what d'ye think ?
Whips it in his pocket ! 'A nice lump of jink ! '
Says Dan ; and he snuggled up closer to me, and he began to fiddle and fiddle,
Lek tryin' to span me round the middle—
Some surt o' coortin' ? thinks I, *he's improvin', I doubt—*
The ould villyan ! He was just tryin' to find out
Had I any more stitched up in my stays !
And a man with such ways—
Would you call him a man ? now would ye, Misthriss ? would ye, though ?
That was the fiddlin'—aye ! he said it, he said it hisself, the ould crow !
Yis, and his dirty ould mouth all of a pucker, and grippin' and nippin',
And declarin' he felt the shillin's slippin'
Between the quiltin's—aw dear ! aw dear !
But I was enough for him—navar fear !

" I says—'This is no place for me,' I says ; and up I jumps—
'I'm off,' I says ; and he rattles his ould stumps—
And—'Off ? ' he says—'Why you've not opened your box yet ! '
'Clear out o' the road ! ' I says. 'I hevn' seen your frocks yet,'
He says, 'nor the sheetin' nor nothin' !—just give us that key—
It's every bit my proppity ! ' he says. 'Out o' the way ! '
I says, and I gript the box. But if I gript it, he gript it, and he shouted and bawled,

And backards and forrards we tugged and we hauled ;
And we staggered this way, and we staggered that way,
And higgledy-piggledy, and I cannot tell what way—
But I gev him a run in on the dresser, and his ould back bent,
And——down he went !

"And the crockery—what there was—all smashed —well to be sure !
And the turmits rowlin' on the floor—
So the box was mine, and I out on the door.
'Murdher ! tieves !' and he run after me full trot—
'You're a robber !' he says ; 'you've robbed me ! everything you got
Belongs to me—I'll bring a shuit,' he says ; 'I'll bring a shuit
For damagers !' he says—the ould brute—
'I'll have your life !' he says,
'Ar'n' you my wife ?' he says—
'Murdher !' he says, 'murdher !'—'*Murdher*—your granny,'
I says—'Good-bye, Dan Cowle ! good-bye, Danny !'
And I left him standin' in the road ; and here I am, as you see—
And, Misthriss ! no more weddin's, aw good sakes ! no, no more weddin's for me !"

ENVOY

GO BACK!

BUT now
From the brow
Of old Skiddaw, high-perched
On the last of the cairns,
Myself and my bairns,
We searched
For our sweetest of sweet little Hesperids;
And our lids
Were stung
By the "saut"
Sharp slung
From the wall
Of a squall,
That wrought,
And blurred,
And slurred
The air
Out there,
So that nought
Of our Isle,
The while,
Could we see,
But a film of the faintest ivory.
Just half-way down the slope we sit,—

When, suddenly, the sky is lit—
Look, look! as through a sliding panel
Of pearl, our Mona! Has she crossed the Channel
For us? that there she lies almost
A portion of the Cumbrian coast?
Dark purple peaks against the sun,
A gorgeous thing to look upon?
Nay, darling of my soul! I fear
To see your beauty come so near—
I would not have it! This is not your rest—
Go back, go back, into your golden West!

NOTES

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2. *Braddan Vicarage.* The home of T. E. Brown's childhood and boyhood from 1832 to 1847. See *Letters of T. E. Brown*, by S. T. Irwin, vol. ii. 144: To Miss N. Brown.

4. Verse 9. *Slieu-whallian*, "the mountain of wild colts." The tale is that witches were rolled down the steep slope in a cask studded with nails.

5. *Old John.* An original MS. of the poem is dated Clifton, Dec. 29, 1880. It appeared first in an Isle of Man newspaper, and then in pamphlet form. It gives its title to the volume, *Old John and other Poems*, 1893, now out of print. For Old John (McCulloch) himself, "our old Scotch man-servant," "a Primitive," see *Manxiana*, x., a series of articles on the clergy of the Island Diocese (contributed to the *Ramsey Church Magazine* by T. E. Brown), Jan. 1897, vol. ii. No. 1, where the ways of this old friend, "the indefatigable Caledonian," are graphically described. See also *Letters* (*op. cit.*), i. 142: To Mrs. Williamson.

9. Verse 12. "*The Maister.*" The Rev. Robert Brown, the poet's father, and vicar of Braddan. See *Manxiana*, ix. x. xi.

10. Verse 15. "*Maister*" *Hugh.* T. E. B.'s eldest brother, the Rev. Hugh Stowell Brown.

11. Verse 19. *the intrepid maid.* Margaret Wilson, a girl of 18, drowned in the Solway for her Covenanter faith.

15. *Chalse a Killey.* An "innocent," well known throughout the island. The poem, bearing date *Port Erin, 1875*,

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was printed in a newspaper and in fly-sheet form, and subsequently published in the *Old John* volume.

18. *The Vicarage that shelters under Bradda, i.e.* Bradda Head, overlooking Port Erin and Rushen.

20. *prent the Hemns.* See below, p. 66, *In Memoriam: J. Macmeikin.*

The Peel Lifeboat. This poem all but appeared in W. E. Henley's *Lyra Heroica* (1892). The following in a letter, T. E. B. to H. G. D., Clifton, May 8/91, may be of interest :—

"Henley is bringing out a book of verse to be called 'On the Heights.' It tends to Jingo, and consists of poems by the great men who have celebrated 'the glories of our birth and state'—Milton, Tennyson, and so forth. Among these tremendous poems he wants to pitchfork himself and *me*!!! I am bothered: . . . he persists; and, I suggesting, or, at least, dimly hinting at, adumbrating the idea of a great lifeboat service, as being on the heights of action, he catches at it; and I have tried to put into verse that astounding Peel Lifeboat business, the account of which in the Manx papers I read to the School two years ago. So that is my 'pome,' *valeat quantum* (you are always asking me about 'pomes'). But fancy its lying alongside of 'The Revenge.' Henley has his own bolt ready, unrhymed, but strong and monumental of a sort."

As to date, the annotator has a MS. copy signed "T. E. B., May 5/91 (my birthday)."

23. *Catherine Kinrade* (*aliter* Katharine Kinrade). A MS. gives "June 8/78" as date of composition. See prefatory note to the poem in *Old John* and the *C. P.* edition.

24. *Gob-ny-Ushtey.* First published in *Old John.* This and the three following poems, * *Failand*, * *Portbury*, and * *The Dhoon* (the last dated in MS. Sept. 19/75)—* posthumously published in *C. P.*—let one into a secret of the poet's mind. The places Failand and Portbury are within a walk of Clifton, Bristol. The Dhoon is in a beautiful winding glen, half-way between Laxey and Ramsey, on the east coast of the Isle of Man.

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27. * *Wastwater to Scawfell.* MS. bears date, "*Clifton, Nov. 26/68.*"

* *The Well.* MS. dated "March 1870."

32. *Roman Women.* There are several MS. copies of the series, more or less complete, and differing as regards text or relative order. The version of the *C. P.* reproduced here follows that published for the first time in the *New Review*, Aug. 1895, both textually and as regards the order of the poems. The notebook containing the complete series in MS. is before me. The original MS. in ink, with corrections in blue pencil, is headed :

ROME, 1879–1880
Dec.–Jan.

and consists of fourteen poems, numbered in blue pencil I., II., etc. The title *Roman Women* is given opposite page 1 of the text in blue pencil. In two respects this MS. copy differs from the published version : (1) The first poem of the series, it seems, was omitted either by the poet or by the editor of the *New Review*, or possibly by accident. It has since been published by Mr. Selwyn G. Simpson in *Thomas Edward Brown : an Appreciation.* It runs thus :

Two waftures of great eyes—
  A second's thousandth part—
  One sucked me down the Mälstrom of her heart,
The other ebbed me forth to lonely skies.

Scorn? No! Why should she scorn?
  Coquettish play of fence?
  Not so, but glorious might of innocence—
Of such large blood are Roman women born.

She knows what joy I caught
  That moment, how I rushed
  Right to the centre of her life, yet blushed
She not at all, nor showed a treacherous thought.

Is not this good above
  Most goods for which we sigh?
  To pick the obvious love as we pass by,
And pass, and pick another obvious love.

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(2) The order of the component poems (in this particular MS.), as compared with published text, is as follows :—

I.	Two waftures (with title *Nel Corso* in some MSS.) omitted.		
II.	That look was Heaven	=	2
III.	Close by the Mamertine	=	1
IV.	Ah ! now	=	3
V.	Woman, a word with you !	=	4
VI.	Pomegranate	=	5
VII.	Pretty ?	=	6
VIII.	Good wife	=	7
IX.	Ah naughty	=	8
X.	This is the Forum	=	9
XI.	O Englishwoman	=	13
XII.	You seem so strange	=	10
XIII.	Why does she	=	12
XIV.	A little maiden	=	11

Another presumably earlier version gives order thus : I. Two waftures. II. Pomegranate. III. Good wife. IV. O Englishwoman. V. You seem so strange . . . and there are *variae lectiones*. A letter shows that between the winter of 79/80, in which T. E. Brown with certain friends paid a visit to Rome, and the summer of 1895, he was working at the poem.

40. The MSS. all give "of ought but genial cares" ; *ought*, not *all*, and this correct reading we have now restored.

46. "*Ne sit ancillae.*" For title see Horace, *Odes*, ii. 4.

Chagford, by Dartmoor. See below, p. 112.

47. *Ibant obscurae.* For title see Vergil, *Aeneid*, vi. 268. The poem has a MS. date, *St. Bees, Aug. 10/68.*

48. *St. Bee's Head.* MS. date, *St. Bees, Aug. 6/68.* Published in *Old John*. The original MS. title is *Cliff Studies*. The poem is the first of a series written in August 1868.

50. *An Oxford Idyll.* My MS. copy has this note at top :

(All that I got at Oxford)
An Idyll.

a remark to be taken *cum grano*. The date is *Magdalen Walk, May 24/75.*

Line 4. *lilac, v. l.* lilacs.

Scarlett Rocks, Isle of Man. Cf. Tennyson, *Maud*, xxiii.

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51. *Lime Street* (Liverpool, I think). MS. date, *Aug. 1883*.

Hotwells. MS. date, *Clifton, June 8/68*. Poem on a sheet of foreign notepaper. A letter to a friend on the last page reads:

> I sometimes write little things at night. It would be so delightful, at least so soothing, if we both did, and exchanged, just to show that our souls live. As an experiment I send you this. The lines were suggested by a woman I saw in the Hotwells this morning. T. E. B.

53. *Clifton*. The earliest MS. of this poem is dated (*1869*), and the second line runs:

> My feet for six long barren years have trod.

The poem was published in *Old John*, 1893, and "six long" has become "thrice nine."

Wordsworth's Castle (?) is the author's note to a MS. copy, but he did not correct the text. *Quandoque bonus . . .*

For *Peel*, *Bradda* (Head, above Port Erin), *Scarlett*, and other localities, see *A Seven Days' Walk in the Isle of Man* (by the Rev. T. E. Brown):

> "Then along the 'back of *Langness*'—commonly called *the back o' Langish*—to Langness point" [the eastern "claw" of Castletown Bay].
>
> "Make for Scarlett and bathe there. This is a prime beatitude." [Scarlett point guards Castletown Bay on the west.]
>
> "There is a path to the creek of Perwick. Keep rather up the little glen (*Glen Chass*)" [on the way to *the Chasms*].

Carraghyn (or Carraghan), the high point in the very heart of the Island, above Injebrek (see *Old John*, p. 11 above), Parish of Braddan.

Barrule. Whether North Barrule or South Barrule doesn't appear; blaeberries are apt to be found on both probably. But I conjecture North, above Ramsey. See *Letters*, vol. i. 200: To Mrs. Shenstone.

54. *Fives'-Court*. So entitled (in pencil) MS. notebook, probably 1875. First published in *The National Observer*, April 30, 1892.

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54. *The Lily-Pool.* My MS. has the word ἀντίδοτον at the end of the poem, and the date: *Midsomer Norton, June 21/68.*

56. "*Not willing to stay.*" The MS. is dated *St. Bees, Aug. 19/68.* See note above, p. 48.

57. *Ecclesiastes.* There is a note to my MS.: *After Chapel, (This happened yesterday)*, and the date, *Clifton, May 9/69.* MS. gives last line of 1st verse, "proper," (*sic*) in line 4; *Old John* edition, *proper.* In the line above read: prayer-book-thumbing.

59. *In Memoriam: Paul Bridson.* MS. gives date *Feb. 1876. Braddan.* See p. 3 above.

61. *White Foxglove.* Published first in the *New Review*, Oct. 1895.

63. *Octaves.* Published first in the *New Review*, July 1896.

64. *Poets and Poets.* The original MS. is in pencil inscribed:

H. G. Dakyns
D.D.
T. E. B. date 68?

65. *Opifex.* The original MS. has the title *Parenthèse*, and the date *Oct. 8/68.* The poem appeared under its title *Opifex* in the *Old John* volume.

66. *In Memoriam: J. Macmeikin.* For "Chalse" and the "Hymns" see above, p. 20.

"*God is Love.*" MS. date, *Clifton, April 14/83.*

Line 4. The little girl naturally speaks Anglo-Manx: "say" = "sea."

67. *The Intercepted Salute.* MS. date, *Coniston, July 21/69.*

68. Μεταβολή (*to S. T. I.*) is the MS. title. The reference is to Arist. *Eth. N.* vii. Date 1892?
Jessie. MS. date, *July 17/68.*

69. *Boccaccio.* MS. date, *Clifton, Feb. 25/81*, with title (*Sonetto*). See *Letters*, vol. i. 201.

70. *To E. M. O.* My MS. has the title, Ὠκλείῳ Βροῦνος, and a note: "Yesterday, when you were playing the miraculous *Haupt.*" See *Letters*, vol. i. *Introd. Memoir, E. M. Oakeley's Reminiscences*, p. 46.

72. *M. T. W.* Maurice Temple Wilson; *nat.* 1876, *ob.* 1886. (See *Clifton College Annals, sub anno* 1887.)

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72. *The Organist in Heaven.* MS. date, *May 5, 1878.* First published in *Old John*, with T. E. Brown's own title, *Wesley in Heaven.* Dr. S. S. Wesley, the great composer.

74. *To E. M. O.* MS. date, *May 6/78.*

* *A Sermon at Clevedon.* As the * indicates, first published in the *C. P.* edition posthumously by the editors.

75. *Sublapsarian.* A term of the philosophy of Predestination. The decree of God deals with man as fallen (*sub lapsu*), not before the Fall (*supra lapsum*) as the Supralapsarians maintain.

78. *On the sinking of the "Victoria."* Published in the *National Observer*, July 15, 1893. See *Letters of T. E. Brown*, vol. i. p. 204, to S. T. Irwin, Ramsey, July 18, 1893.

* χρῖσμα: *to His Godson*, Henry Graham Dakyns (the younger). The poem is signed *T. E. B., Clifton College, March 2/74.*

83. "*Star of Hope.*" See *Fo'c's'le Yarns: Tommy Big-Eyes*, *C. P.* p. 252, "He was a bit of a poet, was Tommy—aye." This and the next are two of "Tommy's songs."

84. "*Apple-tree.*" See *The Manx Witch*, *C. P.* p. 538, "Aye, them's Tommy's, Tommy Big-eyses."

* *Spes Altera* (date 1896). First published in *C. P.* p. 105, as an appropriate Prologue to the whole series of *Fo'c's'le Yarns.* For a prose version, as it were, of the thought, see *Letters*, ii. p. 175, *T. E. B. to Mr. Rydings*, Ramsey, June 3, 1896.

Verse 2. *Where Plato marked the virgin souls . .* See *Republic*, x. 614 foll.

And Spenser saw old Genius, *F. Q.* III. vi. 32 . . See also *Epithalamion*, 397 foll., *F. Q.* II. xii. 47.

87. "*To Sing a Song . .*" The prefatory poem to *Fo'c's'le Yarns*, 1881 edition. See *C. P.* p. 107, Dedication.

88. "*Dear Countrymen . .*" The prefatory poem to *The Doctor and other Poems*, 1887 edition. See *C. P.* p. 328.

Clevedon Verses. The series belongs to the year 1878, I believe.

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89. I. *Blest mourner*: in reference to *In Memoriam*.

II. Braddan Brown; *nat.* 1869, *ob.* 1876. See *Aber Stations*, p. 138 foll.

94. *Lynton Verses.* The MS. date of the series is *Lynton (1877)*, the original order in a certain black 4to notebook being:

I. "May Margery"	=	I. in *Old John* and *C. P.*
II. "High overhead" (not published)		deest.
III. "At Malmsmead"	=	II. in *Old John* and *C. P.*
IV. "Milk! milk! milk!"	=	III. ,, ,,
V. (Shooting) "Nay, why did'st kill it?" (not published)		deest.
VI. "Sweet breeze"	=	V. ,, ,,
VII. (Symphony)	=	VI. ,, ,,
VIII. "Lynton to Porlock,"		
deest	=	IV. ,, ,,

May Margery. MS. date, *Lynton, April 14, T. E. B.*

95. *At Malmsmead.* Originally No. III. A MS. letter copy gives: *For M. Dakyns. T. E. Brown. April 26/77.*

96. *Lynton to Porlock (Exmoor).* My MS. gives: *To H. G. and M. D.*, and is signed, *Exmoor, July 8/77, T. E. B.* The notebook MS. gives the title, and a note at the end, "On my way home from Lynton to Bristol—July 8/78." Probably 78 is a slip of the pen for 77.

97. *Sweet breeze.* MS. letter copy gives, *For H. G. D.*, and at the end is an invitation to his friends, "So come! do! I wish you would. T. E. Brown, April 26/77."

"*High overhead.*" The hitherto unpublished No. II. runs in my MS. letter copy thus: *Lynton, April 13/77*:—

High overhead
  My little daughter
Was going to bed:—
  Below
  In twenty fathoms of black water
  A cod went sulking slow—
Perceived the light
That sparkled on the height,
  Then swam

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Up to the filmy level,
Brought's eye to bear
With dull fixed stare,
Then—"Damn!"
He said—and "Devil!—
I thought"—but what he thought who knows?
One plunge, and off he goes
East? North?
Fares forth
To Lundy? Cardiff? But of that keen probe
That for an instant pierced the lobe
Of his sad brain,
Tickling the phosphor-grit,
How long will he retain
One bit?
And then above
My little daughter kneels, and says her prayers.
Quite right!
My little love—
Good night!
Sweet pet!
Put out the light!
And so
I go
Downstairs—
And yet—and yet—
That cod!
O God!
O God!

97. *"Shooting."* The original No. V. runs:—

Nay, why did'st kill it?
God did not will it—
See! blood dripping on the grass!
Thou fool,
With murd'rous tool,
If we might so befriend thee,
'Twere well to send thee
To school
To Balaam's ass.

100. *The Empty Cup.* MS. date, *T. E. B., St. Bees, Aug. 18/68.* See above, note to p. 48. This is one of the *Cliff Studies.*

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103. *The Pitcher.* MS. date: *Prep. School, July 17* } *68, T. E. B.* *July 18*

105. *Song.* Set to music now.

Veris et Favoni. For title, see, of course, Hor. *Odes*, I. iv.

106. *In Gremio.* Cf. below, *Specula*, p. 175, and *Disguises*, p. 134. In the last line a MS. gives "Who bids thee *come*," perhaps more correctly, echoing the preacher's cry.

107. *Exile.* Verse 3. *Gadire* (*Gades*, now *Cadiz*). The original Phœnician *Gaddis* or *Gadir* = Gk. *Gadeira.*

112. *Dartmoor: Sunset at Chagford.* * *Homo Loquitur. Respondet* Δημιουργός. See Bibliographical Note *supra*, explaining the relationship of the two portions of the poem and the meaning of the * to the earlier.

122. Ποιημάτιον *for John Percival. March 8/74* (*In chapel*) is the original MS. title. See Bibliographical Note to *C. P.* p. xxv.

123. * *Vespers.* MS. date, *May 6/78.*

* *I bended unto me.* Date, *May 6/78.*

125. * *To W. E. Henley.* See *Epilogue* to *Poems, W. E. Henley.*

* *When Love meets Love.* MS. date, *May 5/78.*

126. * *Between our Folding Lips.* MS. date, *May 6, 1878.*

* *Ex ore Infantis.* So the editors of the *C. P.* entitled the poem written by T. E. Brown in Dec. 1894, and addressed to the friend to whom he owed the story. See *Letters*, ii. p. 74: To Miss Graves, *Ramsey, December 4, 1894.*

127. * *O God to Thee I yield.* See *Aber Stations.*

* *To G. Trustrum.* "The landlord of the Port Erin Hotel . . . sent me a beautiful Christmas card. I sent him the following, December 31, 1895": [here follows the poem] and then the author adds: "'Sun that goes' is rather feeble. But—'however.'" See *Letters*, ii. p. 157: To S. T. Irwin, Ramsey, January 21, 1896.

128. * *An Autumn Trinket.* MS. date, *Clifton, Oct. 26/70.*

129. * *Sad! Sad!* MS. date, *Clifton, 1870.*

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129. *Reconciliation.* MS. date, *July 16/75.*

132. *The Schooner.* MS. date, *Clifton, Oct. 5* [68?].

Verse 1, line 3, *v.l.* "by the quay" } in my MS.
Verse 5, penult line, *v.l.* "fresh-breathed" }

133. *Euroclydon.* For the imagery of this allegorical poem see *The Acts* xxvii. 14 (A. V.); *St. Matthew* xiv. 23; *St. John* vi. 16. For Euroclydon (Εὐροκλύδων) the R. V. has Euraquilo (Εὐρακύλων). For Clauda (Κλαύδη), Cauda (Καῦδα), which has been corrupted by Italian mariners into Gozzo (Mod. Greek *Gavdos*) —the small island off Candia (Crete) S.W.

134. *Disguises.* MS. dates, *Oct. 3/75, Oct. 5/75, July 5/75* respectively.

135. *My Garden.* MS. date, *July 8/75.*

136. *Land, ho!* MS. date, *July 14/75.*

137. *Praesto.* MS. date, *July 5/75.*

Evensong, MS. date, *July 5/75.*

138. *Aber Stations.* The best commentary is a note to a friend with a copy of the Poem dated *May 11/79*:—

"** **** ******—I send you this poem. You will readily see how it is indeed '*pars mei.*'

I cannot doubt but that it will be, in almost as close and immediate a sense, '*pars tui.*'

God bless *your* lambs.

**** ** ******.

T. E. Brown."

139. *Aber Fall* in N. Wales.

141. *Statio Quarta.* Line 19. *dedicate a μύστης* (*mustes*, (*sic*) in one MS.)=one initiated in the "mysteries."

142. Line 23. He as κελευστής (Keleustes in said MS.)= the *Hortator* or fugleman, Ovid. *Met.* iii. 618, *aliter Pausarius*—the boatswain or officer who gave out the chaunt (keleusma) which was sung to give the stroke, etc., to the rowers. As represented in the Vatican Virgil he sits on the stern with a truncheon in his hand with which to beat time. Cf. Xen. *Hell.* v. 8, where the exploit of Gorgopas is described following the enemy's fleet in the night and taking care not to betray himself either by the noise of oars or by

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the chant of the Keleustes (see *Grote, H.G.* ix. 519). "In place of the usual cry the boatswains timed the rowers by a clink of stones, and silently the oars slid feathering through the waves."

142. Line 30. *the transtra* = ζυγά, the crossbars or thwarts, the benches on which sat the rowers. Cf. Verg. *Aen.* iv. 573; v. 663. Hom. *Od.* ix. 99; xiii. 21.

149. *Statio Septima.* Line 12. *The lamb! the lamb!* See *Letters*, vol. i, p. 90: To J. R. Mozley (1880).

150. *A Morning Walk.* MS. date, *Clifton, Nov. 2/68.*

152. *Epistola ad Dakyns.* An original copy written on six pages of "Form paper" has this inscription on the back:—

Epistola Magna! ! ! ! !
Combure
I have an editio altera.
T. E. B.

The copy is signed and dated at the end,
T. E. B. Dec./69.

three places. To wit—

I. Clifton and Durdham Downs "by the Avon's side."
II. Keswick and the Lake of Derwent Water.
III. The Isle of Man, with particular reference (on p. 156) to Maughold and Bradda.

For the former—where in the year 1857 he was married to his cousin, Miss Stowell — see *Letters*, Introd. Memoir, p. 27, and p. 152, Letter to H. G. Dakyns (1891).

For the latter—see note above, p. 271. Bradda is not to be confounded with another sacred place—Kirk Braddan.

157. Another copy of the Poem gives, "*O Brada do not fail!*" "Brada" (*sic*) three lines from the end.

Nature and Art. It seems that Brown hesitated how to name this poem. The original title (in a certain folio notebook) is *Nature and Human Nature*, which he pencilled out, rewriting *Development*; but finally, in the *Old John* volume, adopted *Nature and Art.* There are also some interesting variants.

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158. I. Verse 2. Originally the last half of the line ran—

, and haply took their place.

I. Verse 6. ὀαριστύς (*sic*) MS. (oaristús). See Hom. *Il.* xiv. 216.

159. I. Verse 8. *Ixion . . . Nephele.* See Pind. *Pyth.* ii. 36 foll.—

ἐπεὶ νεφέλᾳ παρελέξατο,
ψεῦδος γλυκὺ μεθέπων, ἄϊδρις ἀνήρ.
εἶδος γὰρ ὑπεροχωτάτᾳ πρέπεν οὐρανιᾶν,
θυγατέρι Κρόνου· κ.τ.λ.

For glorying by dear deceit beguiled,
A phantom—forgèd of the mist
In image of the solemn sovereign child
Of Kronos old—he clasped to him and kissed
The dreadful lovely lips that Jove's own hand had curved
Like to hers.

W. R. Paton's Rendering.

And see for a humorous treatment of the story, Lucian, *Deor. Dial.* vi.

I. Verse 12. Last line. Original reading: *Bedeck thine immortality of charms.*

161. I. Verse 18. This verse in the MS. notebook runs—

It is because thou wilt not recognise
An added Art of Life
That comes between us and those ancient skies,
As if it were still the time
Of Adam in his prime
And we were babes astride upon Eve's awful thighs.

with a variant of lines 3 and 4—

As if the age was ripe
For Adam and his wife.

I. Verse 19. *sadly silent*, so in *Old John* the original reading of the notebook being "*silent*," corrected in pencil "*so in silence.*"

II. Verse 1. The MS. has:

O Heaven! the puppy! Is this gratitude?
"A foster-sister" saidst thou?
An "Art of Life"? what fell Locusta stewed

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That damned fucus? Spreadst thou
That unction on thy soulcule? Wed'st thou
That specious harlotry from Hell's black bosom
spewed?

the 5th line being corrected in pencil thus—
The stuff upon thee?

161. II. Verse 3. *Eve, Adam!* in reference to verse 18 above, where "Adam" (in the received text) is subaudite—suggested but not named.

II. Verse 6. *Urging.* The MS. has "Beating," corrected in pencil "Ranging."

II. Verse 9. *development.* See note above on Title.

II. Verse 10. *bipes implume*: in reference to the definition of Homo (Man) as *animal bipes implume*—a featherless biped. Cf. Plat. *Deff.* 415 A. ἄνθρωπος ζῷον ἄπτερον δίπουν.

II. Verse 11. See "Social Science," p. 176 above.

164. II. Verse 14. *skiomachy*, fighting with a shadow, a mock fight, shadow-fence.

Of Harlequin with smirk. The notebook has "skip," perhaps thus corrected for *Old John*, in order to avoid a jingle with "skips" in the next verse.

Verse 15. *As the dull Fury whips The ineffectual ghosts.* Cf. Milton's "blind Fury" in *Lycidas*, and for the image, Virg. *Æn.* vi. 571.

165. Verse 21. The first line in the MS. notebook reads thus:

For me true happiness—my scope I find;

and the last line gives for *fence* "guard."

166. *Life.* MS. date, *June, July 98.*

167. *Alma Mater.* A MS. gives as title "Mother Earth," and date, *Clifton, Nov. 27, 68.*

168. Verse 3. *unjustest of novercae.* Cf. Virg. *Ecl.* iii. 33.

Triton Esuriens. MS. date, *St. Bee's, Aug. 13/68. T. E. B.*

170. Verse 6. In place of the last line my MS. gives:

Oh, I am hungry, hungry at my heart!

and in verse 7, in place of "Nay" *Nay* (*sic.*)

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170. Verse 6. *Israel and Hellas.* A MS. date, *June 20/68.* Another MS. gives *July 68*, and there are variant readings, *e.g.*—

Verse 1, line 4, for *feres*, "peers."
,, 9, ,, 2, ,, *swart*, "swarth."
,, 10, ,, 5, ,, *souls*, "hearts."
,, 11, ,, 5, ,, *fire*, "flesh."
,, 12, ,, 7, ,, *heart*, "breast."

For the problem see *Letters*, vol. i. p. 135: To J. R. Mozley.

172. *Dreams.* I have a MS. copy giving some variants from the version published in *Old John*. It is dated at the end, *June 9/68*. "Dear Dakyns

$$? \left\{ \begin{matrix} \beta\acute{\iota}ου \\ \zeta\omega\hat{\eta}ς \end{matrix} \right\} σημεῖον.$$

T. E. B."

173. The variants are slight, *e.g.*—
In verse 5, line 4 runs:

Dropt from my soul beneath.

In verse 6, line 4 runs:

The bias long and true.

179. III. *Narrative.* See *C. P.* pp. 618-55. The two narratives of this section written in ordinary English were first published in 1889 in the volume entitled, *The Manx Witch and other Poems.* It contained four stories, viz. the two final *Fo'c's'le Yarns*, spun in his accustomed manner by Tom Baynes; and the two stories told, as was natural, in ordinary English by the Curate and the Parson (or "Pazon," as we have learnt to call him). The Preface to the volume, signed *T. E. B.*, and dated *Clifton, April 1889*, serves to introduce the several narrators; and though we are not immediately concerned with Tom Baynes or the *Fo'c's'le Yarns* proper in this selection, yet for the sake at once of readers who have not ready access to earlier editions and of the author's self-criticism, we repeat the poem. [See *C. P.* p. 510.]

First comes Tom Baynes among these sorted quills,
In asynartete octosyllables,
Methinks you see the "fo'c's'le" squat, the squirt

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Nicotian, various intervals of shirt,
Enlarged, contract—keen swordsman, cut-and-thrust
Old salt, old rip, old friend, Tom Baynes comes fust.

Succeeds our Curate, innocent and good,
The growth of Oxford in her sanest mood;
Dame Nature's child, though bred among the Stoics,
And if he gush, he gushes in heroics.
Forgive the youth if sometimes he relax
In extra gush of pseudo-docmiacs.

Just hear our Pazon, reverend and meek;
In unadorned verse I make him speak,
As is most fit. To him Tom Baynes' rude style
Were "simply barbarous"—I see him smile
His smile. "Poor Tom has thoughts beyond his station,
But language! sir—unfit for publication."
The Curate's rhymes he haply thinks audacious,
Emphatic, overwrought. "But 'twere ungracious
Of me to criticise a gentleman
That is so kind and clever." There again
You have our *Pazon*. So he says his say,
And all my dreams of Manxland fade away.

CLIFTON, *April* 1889. T. E. B.

181. *Mary Quayle: The Curate's Story.* The scene is laid in the north of the Isle of Man. *Barrule* is North Barrule. From the crest that fronts *Cornaa*, the stretch of coast from Ayre to Maughold Head facing Ramsey Bay is visible, over which the thunder brooded. *Gob-ny-Scuit*, the centre of the scene, is on the east spur of North Barrule.

185. Line 15. *did the night.* The Curate reproduces Richard's colloquial style of speaking; "did for the night," or "did in the night," I suppose.

187. Line 25. *the pö'ms.* Richard's Anglo-Manx pronunciation of "poems."

208. *Bella Gorry: The Pazon's Story.* The scene is laid in the north-west of the Isle of Man, at a point between Jurby and Point of Ayre, whence north-west is visible the Mull of Galloway, and due west the hills of Morne in Ireland.

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For the ruined cottage, which is the centre of the scene, called in the native tongue a *tholthan*, see *Spes Altera*, p. 85.

211. Line 28. *the mooragh.* A waste sandy tract, see line 3 of this poem, p. 208 above.

227. IV. *Dramatic Lyrics* (*Anglo-Manx*). See Introduction, p. xxxix.

229. *In the Coach.* "And that sequence of portraitures called *In the Coach*—is there anything like them elsewhere?"—W. E. H., Introd. to *C. P.* p. xiv.

The six poems of this series were first published by the author himself in the *Old John* volume, 1893. Their composition, as part of a longer series, had occupied his mind at intervals during the two preceding years. An unpublished letter to a friend, dated *Lake View, Keswick, Aug. 30/91*, refers to its commencement:

"I have been writing a good deal (there has not been much else to do), and I have devised a sort of Title; or receptacle, or vinculum, or what not, 'In the Coach.' This is at once a handy utensil and a stimulus to production, as who should say, 'I am empty, fill me.' So might a vase say to a flower-gatherer."

See also *Letters*, vol. i. p. 152: To H. G. Dakyns. *Lake View, Keswick, Sept. 12, 1891*:

"I enclose two 'lil pomes' from 'In the Coach.'"

The little poems were (1) "Yes, ma'am, no, ma'am," which is numbered III., with the title "Passim"; and (2) "Noah's Ark," numbered IX.

What the unpublished poems of the series were is not quite certain.

No. I.—*Jus' the Shy.* For a prose version of this poem see *Letters*, vol. i. p. 145: To J. E. Pearson. *Falcon's Nest, Port Erin, Isle of Man, April 23, 1890.*

233. No. II.—*Yes, ma'am, no, ma'am.* See note above. The MS. title "Passim" I take to mean "'Tis common." A *v.l.* of the last line is, "Poor thing, poor thing."

235. No. III.—*Conjergal Rights* = conjugal rights.

239. *James Gell.* Sir James Gell, the well-known lawyer, and Clerk of the Rolls of the Isle of Man, died in 1905.

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247. *Mater Dolorosa.* This beautiful poem is No VII. of a series named Ἐπιτυμβίδια, the first six of which remain unpublished. See W. E. Henley's encomium, Introd. to *C. P.* edition, p. xv. "*He* deals with nothing but essentials; and his *Mater Dolorosa* is an achievement apart in our various and noble literature." See too Mr. A. T. Quiller Couch in *The Speaker*, Nov. 6, '97.

248. *The Christening* (MS. date, *Dec. 1878*). Published in *Old John*, 1893. The speaker is, of course, the father, Edward Creer.

251. *ould Pazon Gale.* Our old friend of Tom Baynes's *Fo'c's'le Yarns*, and doubtless the narrator of "Bella Gorry."

253. *Peggy's Wedding* (MS. date, *Dec, 1878*). See W. E. Henley, *ib.* p. xiv. "Take *Peggy's Wedding*, for instance, and you will see at once that it is imitated from Swift; but you will also see that it is infinitely better art than Swift's in that it gives you, with a touch of primal farce, but with not so much as the hint of a departure from the big lines of human nature, two characters whom you have never met before, but whom you will know to your dying day."

264. *Envoy: Go back* (MS. date, *Clifton, Feb. 27/81*), with title "Go back." This poem, which was published for the first time in the *C. P.* 1901, seemed to the editors to serve as a fitting *envoy* to the series of *Fo'c's'le Yarns*. It seems to us at this date to serve as a fitting *envoy* to this selection.

Line 19. A MS. gives "nought" for *naught*, I think correctly.

H. G. D.

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